CHARLES STEWART PARNELL



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Taken in the sitting-room at Wonersh Lodge, Eltham, by Mrs. Parnell

CHARLES STEWART PARNELL

His Love Story and Political Life

BY

KATHARINE O'SHEA

(Mrs. Charles Stewart Parnell)

"No common soul was his; for good or ill
There was a mighty power"

HAWKSHAW—Sonnet IX

With Two Rembrandt Photogravures and 16 Plates

VOL. I

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TO

LOVE

"Had the whole rich world been in my power,
I should have singled out thee, only thee,
From the whole world's collected treasury."

MOORE.

PREFACE

ON October 6th, 1891, nearly twenty-three years ago, Charles Stewart Parnell died in the arms of his wife; nearly twenty-three years ago the whole of the civilised world awoke to laud—or to condemn—the dead chief. It ranked him with the greatest heroes, or with the vilest sinners, of the world, because he had found and kept the haven of her arms with absolute disregard of that world's praise or blame till death, the only power greater than the love that held him there tore him from them.

And then the hate that followed him to the grave turned to the woman he had loved to vent upon her its baffled spleen; not considering that such a man as he would keep the heart of his wife as closely in death as he had kept it in life; so closely that none could come near it; so secretly that none could find the way to plant therein a sting. And so for these more than twenty-two years, I, his wife, have lived upon memories so happy and so precious that, after time had brought back some meaning to my life, I took a certain pleasure in reading all men had to say of him whom they so little knew. I have found many things in these books that made me smile or made me sad. There were the writers who looked at him obliquely, and wrote that he was

crooked, or from below, and exclaimed on his want of perspective, or from any and every point of view but that of an honest directness which is, after all the only point of view whence ordinary men can truly observe a great one. Yet, never in all the "lives,' "articles," or "appreciations" that I have read has there been one that could say—or one that desired to say—that Parnell was not a man who stands out sharp and clear from other men for good or ill.

But now, after all these years, one of Parnell's erstwhile followers has arisen to explain to anothe generation that Parnell was not really such a man as this, that he was one of Ireland's eternal failures One who held her dear indeed, but one who balanced her welfare against the clutches of a light o' love with all the foolishness of callow degeneracy, so fondly imagined chivalry by the weak. Not a man who gave his country his whole life, and found the peac and courage of that life in the heart of the woman h loved. No, that is how a man lives and loves, whethe in secret or before the whole world. That is how Parnell lived and loved, and now after these long year I break my silence lest the unmanly echo of excus given forth by Mr. O'Brien in an age that loves excus may cling about the name of the man I loved. It is a very poignant pain to me to give to the world any account of the sacred happiness of eleven years of my life and of the agony of sorrow that once seemed to great to bear; but I have borne it, and I am s near him now that I fear to leave near the nam of that proud spirit the taint of excuse that h loathed.

Parnell never posed as "rather the victim than the destroyer of a happy home," as Mr. O'Brien suggested in the *Cork Free Press* of last year, and he maintained to the last day of his life that he suffered no "dishonour and discredit" in making the woman he loved his own.

And because Parnell contravened certain social laws, not regarding them as binding him in any way, and because I joined him in this contravention since his love made all else of no account to me, we did not shrink at the clamour of the upholders of those outraged laws, nor resent the pressing of the consequences that were inevitable and always foreseen. The freedom of choice we had ourselves claimed we acknowledged for others, and were wise enough to smile if, in some instances, the greatness of our offence was loudly proclaimed by those who he knew lived in a freedom of love more varied than our own. For the hypocrisy of those statesmen and politicians who, knowing for ten years that Parnell was my lover, had with the readiest tact and utmost courtesy accepted the fact as making a sure and safe channel of communication with him; whom they knew as a force to be placated; those who, when the time came to stand by him, in order to give Ireland the benefits they had promised him for her, repudiated him, from under the cloak of the religion they thereby forswore; he, and I with him, felt a contempt unspeakable. Twenty-four years ago, as I write this, I said to Parnell: "You are fighting for Ireland's freedom, but—she hugs her chains." And still she hugs her chains, and will hug them, for she killed the subtle brain and

steadfast heart that alone could free her. For Parnell knew the Irish people, knew how to support their unstability, how to guide their fervent patriotism, how to lead the uplifting of a spirit long cowed but never subdued.

And, as he knew them, so he loved them, and had he lived one dreams that Ireland might, long years ago, have come into her own, the honoured mother of her nobler sons, who, no longer sent forth to toil for other nations, should spend themselves in her service to earn for her a name that should no longer be a byword and a sneer among the Nations.

In this book I am giving to the public letters so sacred to my lover and myself that no eyes other than our own should ever have seen them, but that my son was jealous for his father's honour, and that I would not my lover's life should seem in these softer days a lesser thing, beset with fears and indecisions that he did not know. I have lived in those eleven years of Parnell's love so constantly that nothing has been lost to me of them, and the few details of them that I give will show a little of what manner of man he was, while still I keep for my own heart so much that none shall ever know but he and I.

That part of the book dealing with the earlier stages of my life I had no idea of writing till it was suggested and urged upon me by my children. This chronicle of uneventful years was easy to me, for I have told it as I used to tell it to Parnell when he wished to rest from political talk and consideration. It will be of little interest to the general public except

as showing the finger of Fate pointing down the path that led me to him.

In regard to the political aspect of the book those who know the Irish history of those days will understand. My lover was the leader of a nation in revolt, and, as I could, I helped him as "King's Messenger" to the Government in office. It has been erroneously said by some of the Irish Party that I "inspired" certain measures of his, and biased him in various ways politically. Those who have said so did not know the man, for Parnell was before all a statesman; absolutely convinced of his policy and of his ability to carry that policy to its logical conclusion. Self-reliant and far-seeing, the master of his own mind.

I was never a "political lady," and, apart from him, I have never felt the slightest interest in politics, either Irish or English, and I can honestly say that except for urging him to make terms with the Government in order to obtain his liberation from prison, I did not once throughout those eleven years attempt to use my influence over him to "bias" his public life or politics; nor, being convinced that his opinions and measures were the only ones worth consideration, was I even tempted to do so. In my many interviews with Mr. Gladstone I was Parnell's messenger, and in all other work I did for him it was understood on both sides that I worked for Parnell alone.

KATHARINE PARNELL.

Brighton, April, 1914.

The following letter appeared in *The Times* of Sept. 10, 1913:—

SIR,—As the only son of the late Captain William Henry O'Shea, I must protest against the scandalous insinuations contained in statements made by a Mr. William O'Brien to the *Cork Free Press*, and which were reproduced by you in your issue of Monday last. I had never heard of Mr. William O'Brien until I saw the paragraph of which I complain. Mr. O'Brien's claim to speak with authority upon the O'Shea *v.* Parnell case, about which he has no inside knowledge, appears to rest upon his assertion that he received two short notes from the late Mr. Parnell.

The deduction drawn by Mr. William O'Brien, "The Irish leader would have been shown to be rather a victim than a destroyer of a happy home, and the divorce would never have taken place," is a slander upon my late father and my mother, and absolutely without foundation.

I have written to my mother (now the widow of the late Mr. C. S. Parnell) upon the subject, and she replies:—

"William O'Brien, of whom you ask, was a member of the Irish Party under Mr. Parnell's leadership. I quite agree with you as to the insult to myself, your father's memory, and, above all, to my late husband, Mr. Parnell, that is contained in the unwarrantable interpretation Mr. O'Brien has put upon the letter of my husband's he has published, and I now propose, with your consent, to publish as soon as possible myself the letters of my late husband, which, as you

know, I had left directions should be published after my death."

I may say that the letters to which my mother refers constitute an absolute refutation of the allegations published by Mr. William O'Brien.

I have instructed my solicitors, Messrs. Henry Hilbery and Son, to write to Mr. William O'Brien, care of the *Cork Free Press*.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

GERARD H. W. O'SHEA.

Hotel Metropole,
Brighton,
Sept. 9, 1913.

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CHARLES STEWART PARNELL

HIS LOVE STORY AND POLITICAL LIFE

CHAPTER I

MY EARLY LIFE

"Go forth; and if it be o'er stoney way
Old Joy can lend what newer grief must borrow,
And it was sweet, and that was yesterday,
And sweet is sweet, though purchased with sorrow."

F. THOMPSON.

As a child I used to waken to the dawn growing slowly into day, when the mist was rising from the lake, and floating in soft clouds through the trees which overhung the water. I heard the faint, uncertain call of the wild duck as they alighted and the flapping of the wings of the half-awakened swans. Then came the soft swishing of the cart horses, as they stood in the water to drink before beginning the day's work, and I listened with delicious fear in the gloom, wondering if it would be safe to creep downstairs without waking anyone, and out under the great trees where the sun was beginning to tip the golden leaves; then on over the bridge to the other side of the lake to feed the swans. I was over the bridge before I had ceased wondering. On I would go in the spirit of glorious adventure, as fast as my little fat legs could carry me

through the white gate into the cornfields, and beyond the yellow corn stacked into sheaves. Then I used to fill the skirt of my short red frock with ears of wheat, and take it to two old friends of mine who were too feeble to glean for themselves. They lived in tiny cottages at the top of the hill, and always rewarded my labours with ripe bullaces from their little garden.

These old people and the farmer were great friends of mine, and the latter always promised them that all "Miss Katie" could glean should be sent by him to the miller to grind for them.

My life was always very full as a little girl, and the days passed very quickly.

As I was a delicate child I was kept out of doors as much as possible, and as soon as I was old enough to carry them I was allowed to go to fetch the letters before breakfast from the little post office half a mile away. The Rivenhall curate was a great friend of mine, and I used to insist upon collecting his letters also, and turning in for a chat with him—should I find him in his garden. The reproach of my waiting elders on my return used to puzzle me till my father explained that while he and I liked our breakfast better than our letters, grown-up ladies wanted their letters much more than their breakfast.

My father was my dear companion and friend always, and to him I took all my little troubles and griefs and all my joys. Long before I could do more than just hold the two reins he used to let me drive him to and from his church at Cressing, where the clerk stood ready to lift me down, and pat old Prince for having trotted so quickly in my charge.

Those were the days of high pews, and while my father went to the vestry I used to amuse myself in peeping over the top to watch the people coming in, and the old dame who kept the village school sorting out the children as they clambered and clattered up into the gallery. This old lady was a quaint figure, in an enormous poke bonnet and voluminous cloak. She wore her hair tightly banded each side of her gaunt face, and on Sundays was always armed with a long cane, with which she "settled" the school children into their places by administering a sharp tap to each one as he or she subsided into a seat—and decorum.

Then the organ emitted a wheezy gasp as my father came in, and a jerky voluntary was played, while old Jim K., the clerk, marked the places in the books in the pulpit and in his own book. This functionary always sat at a desk just under the pulpit, and said "Amen" at intervals. I always thought it so clever of him to know the right times, and felt great respect for his, to me, extraordinary perspicacity, and also for the fact that he wore a surplice, or, as I thought, an outside shirt, like my father's, only "littler"; but then, of course, he was a "littler" man.

I used to get very bored during the litany, and had to relieve my weariness in speculations on the carved stone figures lying side by side, of a former lord of the manor and his dame, representing to after ages the devotion of their lives together, but to my childish mind merely suggesting a vague wonder that the stiff-frilled collars they wore had not killed them before they had grown so old and dilapidated.

Meanwhile my wandering thoughts were jerked back to the business in hand by my father's sonorous "Let us pray." Jim stuck his head into his book, my father's sank into the pulpit, and I collapsed on to the seat, and meditated on the probable number of bull's-eyes the penny I was clasping so tightly in my hot hand might procure from the old body in the village who kept a few sweets in her window, and had no objection to trading on Sunday.

My father had an excellent rule that twenty minutes was the utmost length of time anyone should be expected to listen to a sermon, but, as I had little idea of time, I used to listen anxiously for the rise and fall of his voice from the opening sentences; for I had early learnt that his voice would fall as he neared the final exhortation. There was a reverent hush for the blessing, and then, while the people clustered together outside to "pass the time of day" with Sir John, I would run as hard as I could to capture my sweets before I was lifted into the high four-wheeled dogcart to drive my father home.

My brothers and sisters were all so much older than myself—most of them married, with children of their own—and my mother was so absorbed in her brilliant boy Evelyn, the affairs of her elder daughters and her own literary work, that had it not been for my father I should have been a very lonely child.

. . . .

My father, Sir John Page Wood, was descended from the Woods of Tiverton, and was the eldest of the three sons of Sir Matthew Wood, Baronet, of Hatherley House, Gloucestershire He was educated

at Winchester and at Trinity College, Cambridge, and after entering into holy orders, before he was twenty-four years of age, was appointed private chaplain and secretary to Queen Caroline, performing the last offices for her at her death in 1820, and attending her body to its final resting-place in Brunswick. He then became chaplain to the Duke of Sussex, and in 1824 was appointed by the Corporation of London to the rectory of St. Peter's, Cornhill.

In 1820 my father married Emma Caroline, the youngest of the three daughters of Admiral Michell (and my father's uncle, Benjamin Wood, M.P. for Southwark at the time, married the second daughter Maria, the "Aunt Ben" of this book). My mother was born in Lisbon, her father being Admiral of the Portuguese Navy. Of her two brothers one became Admiral (Sir Frederick Michell, K.C.B.) in the British Navy, and the other, Charles Michell, became Colonel of the Royal Engineers.

She was married at the age of eighteen to my father, who was still at Cambridge, and the improvident young pair found it extremely difficult to live on the very small allowance that was considered sufficient for my father at college. They appear to have been very happy notwithstanding their difficulties, which were augmented a year later by the birth of a son; and while my father became "coach" to young men of slower wit, my mother, who was extremely talented with her brush, cheerfully turned her beautiful miniature painting to account for the benefit of her young husband and son. She soon became an exhibitor of

larger works in London, and the brothers Finden engraved several of her pictures.

She and my father seem to have idolised their first child, "Little John," and his early death, at about four years old, was their first real sorrow. The boy was too precocious, and when he was three years old his proud young parents were writing "he can read well now, and is getting on splendidly with his Latin!"

Constable, the artist, was a friend of my mother's, who thought highly of her work, and gave her much encouragement, and the young people seem to have had no lack of friends in the world of art and letters. Of my mother, Charles Sheridan said he "delighted in her sparkling sallies," and the young Edwin Landseer was "mothered" by her to his "exceeding comfort."

My mother was appointed bedchamber woman to Queen Caroline, and became very fond of her. The consort of George IV. appears to have taken the greatest interest in "Little John," and I had until a short time ago—when it was stolen—a little workbox containing a half-finished sock the Queen was knitting for the little boy when her fatal illness began.

My parents then lived in London for some years while my father did duty at St. Peter's. In 1832 my father became vicar of Cressing, in Essex, and he took my mother and their (I think three) children there, leaving a curate in charge of St. Peter's. Thirteen children in all were born to my parents (of whom I was the thirteenth), and of my brothers and sisters there were seven living at the time of my birth.

There was little room for all these young people in the vicarage at Cressing, and it was so extremely damp as to be unhealthy; so my parents moved to Glazenwood, a charming house with the most beautiful gardens I have ever seen in a place of moderate size. I think my brother Fred died here; but my first memories are of Rivenhall, where my parents moved soon after my birth. Rivenhall Place belonged to a friend of my father's, Sir Thomas Sutton Weston, of Felix Hall. The beautiful old place was a paradise for growing children, and the space and beauty of this home of my youth left me with a sad distaste for the little houses of many conveniences that it has been my lot to inhabit for the greater part of my life.

My father was a tall, handsome old man with merry blue eyes and a ready smile. He had a cheery word for all, a gentle wit that never found pleasure in another's discomfiture, and a natural dignity that kept him his friends and made no enemies. He troubled himself not at all about the differences between religious parties. Highly cultivated as he was, he possessed the unquestioning piety of a child and the simplicity of faith that "thinketh no evil" and loveth all good.

In politics he was a thoroughgoing Whig, and as he was an able and fluent speaker, and absolutely fearless in his utterances, he became a great influence in the county during election times. I remember, when he was to speak at a political meeting, how he laughed as he tied me up in enormous orange ribbons and made me drive him there, and how immensely proud of him I was (though, of course, I could not understand a word of it all) as he spoke so persuasively

that howls and ribald cries turned to cheers for "Sir John's man."

When he went to London to "take duty" at St. Peter's, Cornhill, he and I used to stay at the Green Dragon, Bishopsgate Street. There was a beautiful old courtyard to this hotel with a balcony, overhung with creepers, running all round the upper rooms. I loved this place, and when I was too young to care much for the long service and sermons, I was quite content that my father should tuck me up safely in bed before going to evensong at St. Peter's.

Sometimes I was not well enough to go to London with him, and on these occasions comforted myself as much as possible with a compensating interest in the habits of the Rev. Thomas Grosse, who took my father's place at Cressing.

The Rev. Thomas Grosse was tall, and the possessor of an enormous "presence"; he had black curling hair and tiny, black, beady eyes. He was a very intellectual man, but did not understand a village congregation, and many were the complaints to me of "Miss Katie, when's our Sir John a-coming home to we? Us don' unnerstand a word parson says." I used to point out to them that he had a lovely way of turning round. Of an enormous weight, he used to pirouette round on one foot as lightly as a girl. But this never seemed to appeal to the villagers as it did to me. He was, however, very good and kind to me, and in the summer evenings, when he knew I was missing my father, he would take me out to look for glow-worms, and show me the stars, teaching me the names of the planets. Years afterwards the knowledge I

thus gained became a great happiness to me, as I taught Mr. Parnell all I knew of astronomy, and opened up to him a new world of absorbing interest.

About this time I was threatened with delicacy of heart and lungs, and, much to my joy, I was ordered "horse exercise." A pony was bought for me, and I rode daily—sitting alternately on the left and right side to counteract any tendency to weakness of the spine. I was intensely happy in my long rides alone on "Eugenie." Before "Eugenie" I had a pony named "Tom Tit," but he was considered too much for me to ride alone.

Friends of my brother Evelyn frequently stayed at Rivenhall, and one of them, a colonel of Light Dragoons, was engaged to one of my elder sisters. This gentleman appealed to my youthful mind as being all that a hero should be, and I used to stick a red fez on my golden curls and gallop my pony past the dining-room windows so that he might see and admire the intrepid maiden, as the prince in my fairy book did!

This gentleman gave me my first "grown-up" book, "Vanity Fair." It was a first edition, illustrated, which I then prized very greatly, and which I still have.

I loved the winter evenings at Rivenhall when my brothers were not at home. My father used to sit by the fire reading his *Times*, with his great white cat on his knee, while I made his tea and hot buttered toast, and my mother and sister Anna read or sketched. I used to write the plots of tragic little stories which

my "Pip" * used to read and call "blood-stained bandits," owing to the violent action and the disregard of convention shown by all the characters concerned.

However, these childish efforts of mine led to greater results, as one evening my mother and sister laughingly offered to buy my "plot" in order to "write it up" into a novel. I was, of course, very proud to sell my idea, and thenceforth both my mother and sister wrote many successful novels, published by Chapman and Hall, and, I believe, at prices that are rarely realised by present-day novelists.

I was thus the unwitting means of greatly relieving my parents' anxiety of how to meet, with their not very large income, the heavy expense of educating and maintaining my brothers, and the responsibilities of their position.

* Sir John.

CHAPTER II

FAMILY LIFE AT RIVENHALL

"*Children know,*
Instinctive taught, the friend or foe."—SCOTT.

AMONG my brother's friends I have happy recollections of the late Sir William Peel, and I remember going into the great hall in a large new hat that had been greatly admired by my flattering old nurse to say good-bye to him when he was leaving after a visit. Sir William remarked cheerfully that I was wonderfully like a mushroom, and to hide my mortification I brought my largest cat (I had thirteen of them!) to show him. "Oh, what an ugly"—then, seeing my face of reproach, he hastily continued—"but *very* fine cat!" Even in such little matters his sensitive kindness showed itself. To this day when members of the family wish to make excuses for any inexcellence they remark hopefully, "but *very* fine cat!"

My brothers loved to tease me, and, as I was so much younger than they, I never understood if they were really serious or only laughing at me. Evelyn was specially adroit in bewildering me, and used to curb my rebellion, when I was reluctant to fetch and carry for him, by drawing a harrowing picture of my remorse should he be killed "in the next war." The

horror of this thought kept me a ready slave for years, till one day, in a gust of temper, I burst out with: "I shan't be sorry at all when you're killed in a war cos' I didn't find your silly things, and I wish you'd go away and be a dead hero now, so there!" I remember the horrified pause of my mother and sister and then the howl of laughter and applause from Evelyn and Charlie. Evelyn was very good to me after this, and considered, more, that even little girls have their feelings.

As a matter of fact, my mother was so entirely wrapped up in Evelyn that I think I was jealous, even though I had my father so much to myself. My mother was most affectionate to all her children, but Evelyn was her idol, and from the time when, as a mere lad, he was wounded in the Crimean War, to the day of her death, he was first in all her thoughts.

During his long absences from home—and he went into the navy at fourteen—she wrote to him daily till her death, and often I remember my father urging her to come in from the cold, damp air as she stood out on the avenue listening for his coming. Evelyn fully reciprocated the devotion of his mother and never fell short of her expectations. It was in his nature to work hard at the thing in hand; but for her sake the thought of failure became impossible, and her intrepid spirit had the immense happiness of seeing her soldier son win honour after honour.

In the large hall of Rivenhall logs burnt in the great open fireplaces. Out of this hall opened a smaller one from which the broad shallow oak stairs

led to the upper rooms. It was a breathless affair, when I was small, to leave the long dining-room and cross these halls, in the flickering light of the log fire, to my father's study, where I used to hammer wildly on the door—too sure that the long shadows were "Something" about to catch me to turn the door-handle in the ordinary way. Safely arrived, I would sit happily on the floor reading books quite beyond my years and comprehension, but, except for gently substituting Scott for a less edifying author, my father let me read what I liked.

The drawing-room was hung with my mother's paintings, and, though I was too young to appreciate them, I used to like to wander round the room looking at the pictures, and specially considering the one of my father as a young man in hunting dress.

This picture rather worried me, as he had given up hunting and said it was because he was so old! His friends liked to tell me stories of his hard riding, and of his erstwhile curate, who would hunt if his vicar did and who was no sooner on a horse than he was off again. "A brave little man, my Pippin, but no sportsman," said my father, and I understood later that, with nine children to educate and start out in life, my "sporting parson" had to grow "too old" very early in life.

Of my brothers and sisters I really knew only four at all well. Clarissa had died at seventeen, and Fred when I was very young; Frank was away with his regiment, my sister Pollie was married and away in India before I was born, and my sister Emma married Sir Thomas Barrett-Lennard while I was still very

young. She was always very kind to me, and I used to love going to visit her at her house in Brighton. Visiting Sir Thomas Barrett-Lennard's country seat, Belhus, I did not like so much, because, though Belhus is very beautiful, I loved Rivenhall better.

There was a very old and large cedar tree on the lawn outside our drawing-room window, with a long, low swing where I used to sway gently backwards and forwards reading my mother's and Anna's manuscript. My mother and sister Anna used to let me read and criticise, at which I felt greatly honoured.

A solitary peacock called "Jackhawks" used to haunt this spot, and he had a startling habit of suddenly springing into the air with a wild cry and pecking savagely at the eyes of the person sitting in the swing. My mother was very fond of him, and one day, finding him with a broken leg, sent a frantic message to the local doctor to come and mend it. He arrived thinking that a member of the family—with whom he was not on good terms—was the sufferer, but when my mother imperiously escorted him to the patient his indignation was swallowed up in amusement.

My mother was a fine musician, and, as I grew older, I began to long to play as she did. There was a beautiful grand piano in the drawing-room, and I used to try to pick out tunes upon it. My mother had spent much money on her eldest daughter's—Maria's (Pollie)—musical education. At the end of this Pollie said she detested it, and would never play a note again if she could help it. When I asked that I might be taught to play my mother said, "No. There is the piano, go and play it if you really want

to learn." In time I could play very well by ear, and began to compose a little and seek for wider knowledge. A few miles away was Witham, and there I found a teacher in the organist of the church. He was quite blind, but a wonderful musician. He taught me a good deal about music, and also taught me to play the organ.

I began as I grew up to have a good singing voice, and later on had lessons from Mme. Lemmens-Sherrington, but my father would have none of the songs and French operatic music my mother liked me to sing to her. Nothing but Handel might I sing to him, and, unaware as I was of the difficulties of the composition, I used to sing "God is for us," "Comfort ye," and "How beautiful are the feet" very creditably.

My father loved this music, and it suited my voice better than light operatic music.

My love of music at this time led me to try composition, and I used to set to music any verses that took my fancy. Among these I was much pleased with Longfellow's "Weariness," and was so encouraged by my mother's praise of the setting that I sent the poet a copy. I was a very happy girl when he wrote to thank me, saying that mine was the best setting of his poem he had ever heard.

Armed with the manuscript of this music and some others, the next time I went to London with my father I went to Boosey's, the musical publishers, and asked their representative to publish them.

"Quite impossible, my dear young lady," he answered at once. "We never take beginners' work!"

I plaintively remarked that even Mozart was a " beginner " once, and could not understand why he laughed. Still, with a smile, he consented to look at the manuscript, and to my joy he ceased to laugh at me and tried some of it over, finally agreeing, much to my joy, to publish " Weariness " and a couple of other songs.

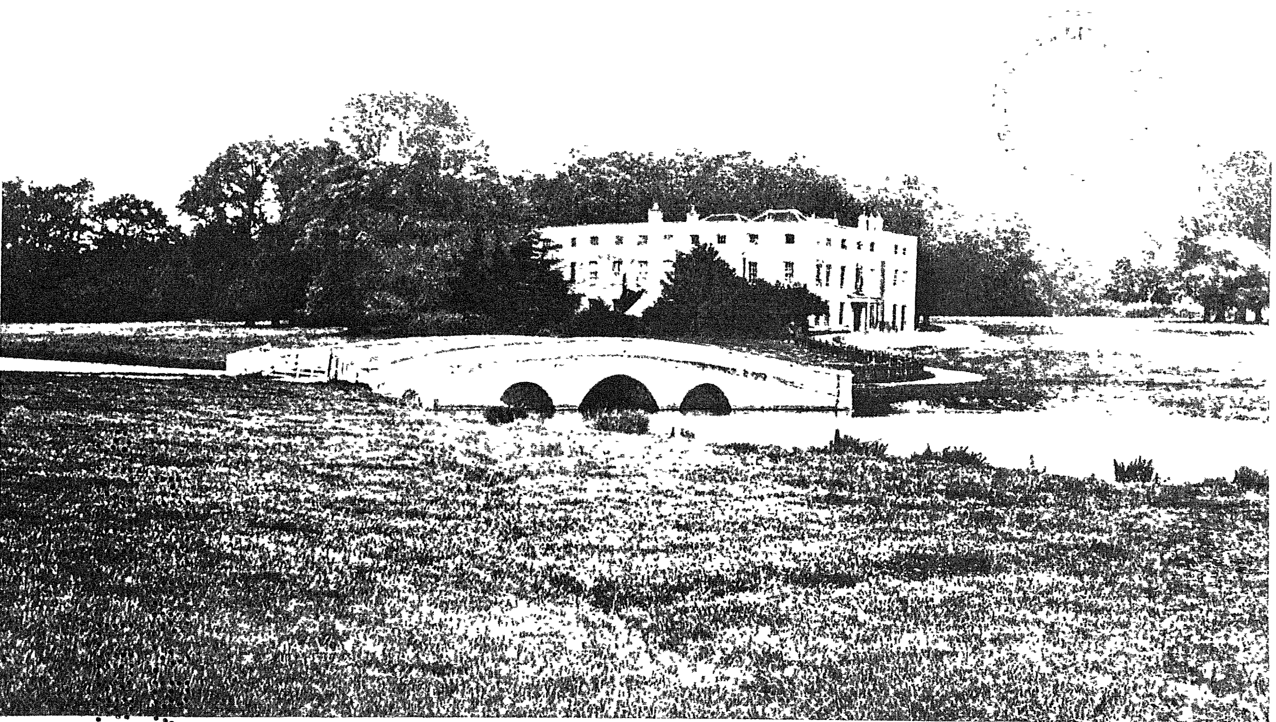
I remember my father's pleasure and the merry twinkle in his eye as he gravely assented to my suggestion that we were a very gifted family !

While my brother Frank (who was in the 17th Foot) was stationed at Aldershot he invited my sister Anna and myself down to see a review. He was married, and we stayed with him and his wife and children in the married officers' quarters, which appeared to us to be very gay and amusing.

I greatly enjoyed seeing the cavalry, with all the officers and men in full dress.

Many of the officers came over to call after the review, and among them was Willie O'Shea, who was then a cornet in the 18th Hussars. There was a small drama acted by the officers in the evening which my brother's wife took us to see, and there were many of the 18th Hussars, who paid us much attention, though, personally, I found the elderly and hawk-eyed colonel of the regiment far more interesting than the younger men.

I sadly wanted someone young enough to play games with me, and the boy who was kept at Rivenhall for " boots and knives " was my chosen companion for cricket. I thought this youth a marvellous player, and when on one occasion I won the game I threw



RIVENHALL PLACE

The early home of Mrs. Parnell

a stump into the air in my joy. My triumph was short-lived, for it came down on my head, and cut it very badly.

My stammering companion dragged me to the house after wildly dabbing at the fast-flowing blood with my pinafore. What with the boy's assurances that I was "bleedin' to def" and the cry of my nurse at the sight of my blood-soaked pinafore, I was thoroughly frightened, and slid out of the difficulties of explanations and the commotion by fainting. This little episode led to the banishment of my chosen ally, the boot-boy; and I was thrown more than ever on my own resources.

Regular lessons were forbidden, but my father used to teach me in a desultory way, and had never-ending patience in answering questions. Looking far back to my childhood I can now see how he used to direct my reading, without my being in the least aware of it, and how he drew me on to questions of countries, places, and men that led continually to further interest and desire for knowledge which he never failed to supply.

He, Sir John, was for twenty-five years chairman of the Board of Guardians, for twenty-two years chairman of the Witham Bench, and also visiting magistrate to the Chelmsford Gaol. He was extremely popular, and I was very proud that I might always drive with him to the court and to various meetings. I remember that I used to experience a great awe on the days when he visited the prison, and I noticed that he was a little sad and silent as we drove home.

He was in great request throughout the county for dinner parties, which were in those days the chief

form of social intercourse in Essex. To these he could not take me, but I used to lie awake till he came to "tuck me up," and gently whisper "God bless you, my Blessing," to which I would respond "God bless you, Pip," in return.

My happiest days were when we took long walks and hunted for wild flowers together. My father knew a good deal about botany, and taught me the names of the flowers I collected, their old English names and the derivations of them. I have still the books he gave me, that I might learn more of the flowers which grow without cultivation, and the power of observation he awoke in me then has been a great solace to me through life.

My father's sister, Mrs. Maddy, lived at Hill House, Messing, and had, I believe, a very good collection of pictures, among them being an original Greuze, "Girl with a Pitcher," which my mother copied exquisitely. I was too young to appreciate these beautiful pictures, and my only memory of my visits to this art collection is of the torture I suffered in being made to eat minced mutton!

CHAPTER III

VISITORS AT RIVENHALL

"A chiel's amang you takin' notes,
And, faith, he'll prent it!"—BURNS.

AMONG other visitors to Rivenhall was Lieut.-Colonel Steele, of the Lancers, a dark, handsome man, who married my sister Anna.

I remember looking at Anna consideringly when I was told this was to be, for, as children do, I had hitherto merely regarded Anna as a sister too "grown-up" to play with on equal terms, and yet not as a person sufficiently interesting to be married to one of the magnificent beings who, like Evelyn's friends, wore such beautiful uniforms and jingly spurs. But my sister had soft, brown hair and a lovely skin, blue eyes that were mocking, gay, or tender in response to many moods, and a very pretty figure. And I solemnly decided that she was really pretty, and quite "grown-up" enough to be loved by the "beautiful ones."

Anthony Trollope was a great friend of my father and mother, and used to stay with us a good deal for hunting. He was a very hard rider to hounds, and was a cause of great anxiety to my mother, for my sister Anna loved an intrepid "lead" out hunting,

and delighted in following Trollope, who stuck at nothing. I used to rejoice in his "The Small House at Allington," and go about fitting the characters in the book to the people about me—a mode of amusement that palled considerably on the victims.

The Reverend John Bellew was a well-known churchman and preacher in those days. He was much admired by my people, but I do not remember much of him, except that he had a very venerable appearance, and that I felt very small and good when he was staying at Rivenhall.

I was very fond of figs when I was a tiny little child, and it was in an excess of this feeling of virtue inspired by Mr. Bellew, that, when a surprised parent asked me why I was unwilling to go and get something that was required from the dining-room, I replied with a shower of tears, "Dem figs bodder me so!"—the figs of my temptation having been left nestling in a plate of cool green leaves in the dining-room.

The hounds used frequently to meet at Rivenhall, and the Master, Mr. Honeywood, and I were great friends, though we should not have been so if he had known how I used to wander quietly off during the hunt breakfast, away to the covers they intended to draw, and tramp about as much as possible to spoil the scent. I would wait till the "quarry" got away, and give wild "view holloa" in the wrong direction, to save my furry friends.

I often used to see the hares feeding in the evening, and could get very close to them as they nibbled the grass, watching me with their bright eyes and, seem-

ingly, unconcerned at my presence. Of course, I never confessed my unsporting behaviour to any of the household, as my brothers always hunted when at home, and my sister also, and they and the Master would not have forgiven it. I did not mind the fox-hunting, but the hares seemed so very much my friends.

I was always glad when our young cousin George (afterwards Sir George) Farwell (Lord Justice Farwell) came to see us. A dear lad, who quite won my childish admiration with his courtly manners and kind, considerate ways.

The Hon. Grantley-Barkley (who was seventy, I believe) was a dear old man who was very fond of me—as I was of him. I was but a child when he informed my parents that he wished to marry me when I was old enough! He was a dear friend of my father's, but, though the latter would not consider the matter seriously, my mother, who was an extraordinarily sympathetic woman, encouraged the idea.

Grantley-Barkley was always called the "Deer-slayer" by his friends. A fine old sportsman, his house, "The Hut," at Poole, Dorset, was a veritable museum of slain beasts, and I used to shudder secretly at the idea of becoming mistress of so many heads and horns.

The dear old man used to write long letters to me before I could answer them in anything but laborious print, and he wrote sheets to my mother inquiring of my welfare and the direction of my education. I still have many of the verses he composed in my honour,

and though the last line of the verse that I insert worries me now as much as it did when I received it, so many years ago, I still think it very pretty sentiment:

> "Then the Bird that above me is singing
> Shall chase the thought that is drear,
> When the soul to *her* side it is winging
> The limbs *must* be lingering near!"

This little one-sided romance died a natural death as I grew up; my old friend continuing to take the kindest interest in me, but accepting the fact that I was no exception to the law of youth, that calls to youth in mating.

My brother Frank suggested to my brother-in-law, Sir Thomas Barrett-Lennard, that Willie O'Shea, who was a first-class steeplechase rider, would no doubt, if asked, ride the horse Honesty that Tom was going to run in the Brentwood Steeplechase. He had already ridden and won many races. Willie readily agreed to ride, and came to stay at Belhus for the race.

I was staying there at the time, and though I was considered too young to be really "out," as a rule I had my share in any festivities that were going on. I remember my brother-in-law saying casually to my sister Emma, who was giving a dinner party that evening: "Who is Katie to go in with, milady?" and she answered promptly, "Oh, *she* shall go in with O'Shea." A mild witticism that rather ruffled my youthful sense of importance.

My first sight of Willie then, as a grown-up, was

on this evening, when I came rather late into the hall before dressing for dinner. He was standing near the fire, talking with the eagerness that was not in those days bad form in young men of the steeplechase he had ridden and won on Early Bird.

I had been so much the companion of older men than he that I was pleased with his youthful looks and vivacity. His dress pleased me also, and, though it would appear a terrible affair in the eyes of a modern young man, it was perfectly correct then for a young officer in the 18th Hussars, and extremely becoming to Willie: a brown velvet coat, cut rather fully, sealskin waistcoat, black-and-white check trousers, and an enormous carbuncle and diamond pin in his curiously folded scarf.

When introduced to me he was most condescending, and nettled me so much by his kindly patronage of my youthfulness that I promptly plunged into such a discussion of literary complexities, absorbed from my elders and utterly undigested, that he soon subsided into a bewildered and shocked silence.

However, in the few days of that visit we became very good friends, and I was immensely pleased when, on parting, Willie presented me with a really charming little poem written about my "golden hair and witsome speech."

Of course, as usual, I flew to show my father, who, reading, sighed, "Ah, too young for such nonsense. I want my Pippin for myself for years to come."

Willie's family, the O'Sheas of Limerick, were a collateral branch of the O'Sheas of County Kerry. Willie's grandfather, William O'Shea (of Rich Hill,

Limerick), had three sons—Henry, John, and Thaddeus. Thaddeus appears to have been the black sheep of the family, wasting his substance in gambling and in breeding unlikely horses to win impossible races. I always thought he sounded rather interesting, and Willie was always a little regretful that he had never been allowed to know much of Uncle Thaddeus.

John went early to Spain, where—and in France —a branch of the family had been settled (the Ducs de Sanlucas) since the rebellion of 1641 in Ireland. Here John married Señora Dona Ysabel Hurtado de Corcuera, founded a bank, and prospered exceedingly, firmly refusing all offers from Thaddeus of a share in the improbable glories—and certain expenses—of his racing stables.

Henry, Willie's father, was of a different build. As level-headed as John, and far more generous, at the death of his father he, the eldest of the three, took the family affairs in hand; and finding the estates mortgaged up to the utmost limit, and the home of his childhood mocking its name (Rich Hill) in its hopeless ruin, he bound himself to a solicitor in Dublin, worked hard, and in due course became himself a fully qualified solicitor. He did extremely well, and, developing a perfect genius for pulling together estates that appeared to be hopelessly bankrupt, business flowed in to him, and he became a very wealthy man. He, equally with John, refused to participate in the ambitions of Thaddeus to establish a record-breaking racing stable, but he was by no means deaf to frequent appeals for "temporary"

help till the latest wonder of Thaddeus's stable had shown his "worth" at Punchestown.

Henry O'Shea married Catherine (a Comtesse of Rome), daughter of Edward Quinlan, of Tipperary. Two children were born to them—Mary (afterwards Lady of the Royal Order of Theresa of Bavaria) and William Henry, whom I married.

Henry O'Shea lived for his children, and contentedly toiled in Dublin for their benefit, while they were being given the most thorough education his mind could devise for them. They alternated between France, England, and Spain, and certainly they became perfect linguists. Willie had no natural taste for learning, but he did fairly well at Oscott, very well in France and Spain, and finished up but languidly at Trinity College, Dublin, before he went into the 18th Hussars, in which regiment his father purchased a commission for him.

He was sent into this regiment with these instructions from his father: "First become a smart officer; secondly, do what the other men do and send the bill in to me!" He was given an excellent allowance, and he followed his father's instructions to the letter.

He was keen about his work in the regiment, and took an honest interest in all that pertained to it. He also "did what the other men did," and greatly enjoyed himself, sending "the bill" in to his father, according to instructions.

He was a handsome lad, gay, somewhat irresponsible, generous, and of a ready—if rather barbed—sense of humour. His cosmopolitan education had given him an ease of manner and self-assurance that

made him popular with his contemporaries, even if it proved somewhat exasperating to his seniors in the regiment.

The 18th was a sporting regiment, and Willie O'Shea, who had a perfect seat and hands, was much in request to ride in the various regimental races in which the 18th were so successful. Young, happy, and healthy, perhaps he took his father's instructions as to "sending in the bill" too literally, for in a few years' time the hard-working Dublin solicitor was vigorously protesting at the enormous cost of keeping his son in the 18th. Willie, contrite and hurt, promised to remember that even the parental purse had its limits, but very pertinently pointed out that he had been told to enjoy himself. As soon as it was possible his father bought his captaincy for him (practically all promotion in those days was purchased, at any rate in times of peace), thinking that the superior rank would bring some greater sense of responsibility to his most affectionate, but rather spendthrift son; but another few years brought "the bill" in again to the extent of some £15,000. Henry O'Shea paid it without cavilling at the amount, but pointed out that Willie's mother and sister would be the sufferers if he paid any further debts, so that it was obvious to him that Willie would not ask him to do so, and would in future make his ample allowance suffice for his needs, even if it necessitated his leaving the regiment. Willie at once agreed that he could, of course, expect nothing further, and eventually did leave the regiment, just before I married him.

Henry O'Shea died in London before Willie and I

married; he was the very kindest of fathers, and Willie was devoted to him. He was clever, just and honourable in all his dealings, and had the most charming manners and a merrier wit than all the rest of the O'Sheas put together. I think his only fault was that in giving his children so foreign an education they lost somewhat of the Irish charm which he possessed so strongly himself. He spoke with a brogue that was music in the ear, and the contrast of this with his son's clear, clipped English and his daughter's (unaffected) French accent was distinctly amusing when the three were together.

Of the Comtesse O'Shea there is little to say but that, to me, she appeared to be a bundle of negations wrapped in a shawl—always in a very beautiful shawl. Even when I first knew her she and her daughter were evidently convinced that she was very old and feeble, although she could not have been much more than middle-aged, and if there had been no daughter to lean upon I do not think she would have desired to lean. She was destitute of any sense of humour, and highly educated, always, I think, an unhappy combination, and her only definite characteristics were her assiduous practice of her religion and her profound sense of my undesirability as a daughter-in-law.

Willie's sister, Mary O'Shea, on the other hand, erred, if at all, on the side of definiteness. Had her health been better she would have been extremely pretty, but rheumatic fever had twice worked havoc on her lovely skin and rendered her widely opened, blue eyes pain-marked and heavy lidded. She also was sadly deficient in humour, and wore herself and her

friends out in her endeavours to make bad Catholics out of indifferent Protestants. She had naturally a very quick temper and had acquired a painfully acute and uncompromising conscience, which gave its possessor far more pain than any outbreak of the temper could cause to others; to whom indeed it came rather as a relief from a too even and conventional nature. She had taken conscientious advantage of her meticulously thorough education, was a human library of dry and solid information, and was as ignorant—and as innocent—of the world at twenty-eight as she must have been at eight.

Her education had left her French in all her modes of thought and speech, and she had a certain air and finish that were entirely so. Mary and I had a certain liking for one another, and I think that, had she not shared her mother's conviction as to my "undesirability," I might have become fond of her. She was betrothed to an Italian of old family and of the blackest of the black Roman society. I believe she was devoted to him in her quiet, methodical way, but after her third attack of acute rheumatic fever, leaving behind it the legacy of heart disease, shortly before they were to be wedded, she decided that her state of health would render her but a drag upon her prospective husband, and that she would ask him to release her from her promise. Her quiet heroism was none the less because she took the stately way of going to his house in Paris, in company with several elderly ladies and a prince of the Church (a Cardinal) to do so. She died a few years later in much suffering but perfect happiness.

CHAPTER IV

PRIVATE THEATRICALS

"*Ah, well, we're mummers all!*"

ONE happy day, when my brothers were at home, someone suggested that we should have some theatricals at Rivenhall.

We had several people staying with us at the time, and promptly formed ourselves into parties to beat up the "county" to come and help. My sister, Lady Barrett-Lennard, came from Belhus, bringing Sir Thomas with her (protesting violently, though he eventually became more enthusiastic than any of us), and my sister Anna, who was now Mrs. Steele.

Our devoted mother, who was wonderfully clever with her brush, left her beloved pictures and novel-writing, and set to work to paint the scenery for our play. She spent days perched up on the top of a pair of tall steps, painting away for dear life, and at the same time listening intelligently to the various members of her family and her guests declaiming their parts below her and appealing for her approval.

"Lady Wood *knew* a man could not help looking a perfect ass, spouting it all in cold blood," and "Dear Lady Wood quite understands how essential it is that I should enter left, the profile is *everything!*"

She never grew impatient, but painted serenely on, coaching us, greeting her guests gaily from her elevated position, and pairing off men and maidens with an unerring intuition that stilled the bickerings that naturally arose in the scramble for the best parts.

My mother was still a very attractive woman with large grey eyes and the jet-black hair that she kept to the end of her days—a woman scorning throughout her life all the cosmetic adjuncts to feminine beauty, she was rewarded by nature with the preservation of her good looks in old age.

The scenery was most successful and the drop curtain a dream of realistic landscape where one could in imagination wander away into a veritable fairy-land of distance.

After much discussion the burlesque of *Amy Robsart*, to be preceded by *Betsy Baker*, was selected. We were each one of us probably convinced that he or she alone was capable of taking the chief parts, but, after much discussion and a firm reminder from Frank that some of us must be content to fill the honourable office of audience, the parts were awarded.

My sister Anna was to act Betsy Baker, while I, to my great joy, was selected for the part of Amy Robsart. The other parts were filled by (the late) Sir Charles DuCane (afterwards Governor of Tasmania), his cousin, Percy DuCane (of the Scots Greys), my sister, Lady Barrett-Lennard, Sir Thomas, and my brother Charlie. I remember the latter made an extremely handsome Earl of Leicester. Sir Charles DuCane was "Crummy," Sir Thomas "Mouser" in *Betsy Baker*, and Willie O'Shea was Queen Elizabeth.

O'Shea was a name not very well known amongst us in those days, and during Queen Elizabeth's appearance on the stage some merry brother officers of Willie's began to sing in an undertone: "O *She* is a jolly good fellow." That was enough to set the whole "house" off, and a shout of laughter went up as Willie, who was then (and always) very sensitive as to foolish puns upon his name, glowered at them from under his red Elizabethan wig. In one moment we had all caught the infection, and the old house rang with "O she's a jolly good fellow," and good Queen Bess, with a look of withering scorn, picked up his skirts and stalked off "left" with as much dignity as he could muster.

Having been once bitten with the theatrical mania, we were restless and anxious for more, and soon we were rehearsing for another comedy, to be enacted this time at Belhus, the home of my brother-in-law Tom and my sister Emma. I have forgotten what the play was; but Mr. Spaulding (of the Foreign Office), Christopher Weguelin, and Mr. (afterwards Sir) Charles Hall) were great acquisitions, as they were fine amateur actors, and had a "finish" that our first performance perhaps lacked. We were properly coached for the series of plays we then began by the late Mrs. Keeley, Mrs. Stirling, and Mr. J. Clarke.

After the success of the Belhus theatricals we soared much higher and acted at Chelmsford, the theatre at Colchester, and even in London. My mother was always most sympathetic, taking the greatest interest in our efforts, and sitting in the wings to prompt and encourage us. This was a

great comfort to me, as I was nervous, and my legs used to shake and my lips tremble so much that it was sometimes only her whispered encouragement that enabled me to sing, or to begin my part at all.

Willie O'Shea used to present me with most beautiful bouquets during these efforts, and, in the pretty fashion of those days, bees and butterflies were so mounted as to appear hovering over the rare exotics.

The rehearsals in amateur theatricals are really the most amusing part of the entertainment, and the learning and hearing one another's parts led to endless laughter, quarrels, and fun.

My sister, Lady Barrett-Lennard, looked so lovely in the powder and patches worn in the old-world plays we so much affected that we often persuaded her to wear powder in the evening when there were house parties in Belhus. She was *petite*, and possessed large, soft eyes and delicate features, and in her diamonds and powder looked as though she had stepped down from one of Sir Thomas's ancestral pictures that hung above her in the dining-room.

I was now given a little sitting-room of my own, where I could be undisturbed, and receive my own friends; and our one outdoor servant, Tim Bobbin, put down a carpet and hung white curtains for me, afterwards filling the window seats with the best flowers he could get. Then my dear sister-in-law (my brother Charlie's wife) drove over to see us, and spent a morning in lining my curtains with pink; and the little room glowed with colour.

My brother Charlie's wife has always been a " Minna of sweet memories " to me, and while my home was

at Rivenhall I always looked forward with pleasure to the days on which she drove over, with her two children, from her home a few miles away.

Charlie, then the second surviving son of my parents, had always been delicate, and in order to keep him constantly in the open air my father had had him taught farming, and when he married he bought a farm near Rivenhall.

Speaking of Tim Bobbin reminds me of the amusement of my family when I received, amongst innumerable other valentines, a gorgeous one from Tim. It was a wonderful affair of satin, paper-lace, and orris-root scent, and had a magnificent representation of two hearts transfixed by a golden arrow. "I would thou wert my bride, love," twirled gracefully round the hearts, and the "Respectful duty of your humble servant Tim Bobbin" was partly scrawled and mostly printed on the back.

I had many valentines. St. Valentine's Day was still eagerly looked for in those days, but I gave this the place of honour, in spite of hearing from Charlie, that my humble admirer, on being rallied on his valentine, exclaimed stoutly: "Eh, Mr. Charles, gi'en a man had two thousan' a year an' Miss Katie to wife he med ask for naught better!"

In the summer I went to stay at Belhus once more, and again met Willie, who was now a very welcome guest with all my people.

Unconsciously we seemed to drift together in the long summer days as we wandered through the park, seeking shelter from the heat in the avenue of great limes, where the air was heavy with scented bloom

and the hum of bees. The rest of the household seemed intent on their own affairs, and we were content to be left together to explore the cool depths of the glades, where the fallow deer ran before us, or the kitchen garden, where the high walls were covered with rose-coloured peaches, warm with the sun as we ate them. What we talked about I cannot remember but it was nothing very wise I should imagine.

Back to the house to tea with the others in the south drawing-room, where the scent of tuberoses and jasmine added to the sweetness of the summer evening, and then Willie and I would pace the avenue in dreamy silence, while the shadows lengthened and the moon rose, and the haze of the summer night drove the deer to higher ground towards the house.

Week after week went by in our trance of contentment. I did not look forward, but was content to exist in the languorous summer heat—dreaming through the sunny days with Willie by my side, and thinking not at all of the future. I suppose my elders were content with the situation, as they must have known that such propinquity could have but one ending.

There was a man by whom I was attracted and who had paid me considerable attention—E. S., stationed at Purfleet. He was a fine athlete, and used to fill me with admiration by jumping over my pony's back without touching him at all. I sometimes thought idly of him during these days with Willie, but was content to drift along, until one day my sister asked me to drive over with a note of invitation to dinner for the officers at Purfleet.

In the cool of the evening I set out, with Willie, of course, in attendance. Willie, on arrival, sprang out of the pony cart to deliver the note, and as he was jumping in again glanced up at the window above us, where it happened E. S. and another officer were standing. Without a moment's hesitation Willie leant forward and kissed me full on the lips. Furious and crimson with the knowledge that the men at the window had seen him kiss me, I hustled my poor little pony home, vowing I would never speak to Willie again; but his apologies and explanation that he had only just wanted "to show those fellows that they must not make asses of themselves" seemed so funny and in keeping with the dreamy sense I had of belonging to Willie that I soon forgave him, though I felt a little stab of regret when I found that E. S. declined the invitation to dinner. He never came again.

Willie had now to rejoin his regiment, and in the evening before his going, as I was leaving the drawing-room, he stopped to offer me a rose, kissing me on the face and hair as he did so.

A few mornings after I was sleeping the dreamless sleep of healthy girlhood when I was awakened by feeling a thick letter laid on my cheek and my mother leaning over me singing "Kathleen Mavourneen" in her rich contralto voice. I am afraid I was decidedly cross at having been awakened so suddenly, and, clasping my letter unopened, again subsided into slumber.

So far nearly all my personal communication with Willie when he was away had been carried on by telegraph, and I had not quite arrived at knowing

what to reply to the sheets of poetic prose which flowed from his pen. Very frequently he came down just for a few hours to Rivenhall, and I drove to meet him at the station with my pony-chaise. Then we used to pass long hours at the lake fishing for pike, or talking to my father, who was always cheered by his society.

At this time Colonel Clive, of the Grenadier Guards, was a frequent visitor. I was really fond of him, and he pleased me by his pleasure in hearing me sing to my own accompaniment. I spent some happy hours in doing so for him when staying at Claridge's Hotel with my sister, and I remember that when I knew he was coming I used to twist a blue ribbon in my hair to please him.

Once, when staying at Claridge's, my sister and I went to his rooms to see the sketches of a friend of my brother Evelyn's, Mr. Hozier, the clever newspaper correspondent, afterwards Sir H. Hozier, and father of Mrs. Winston Churchill. The drawings were, I believe, very clever, and I know the tea was delicious.

It was some time after this that the 18th Hussars were stationed at Brighton. The 18th were great sportsmen, and Willie a "crack" steeplechase rider. He used to school young horses on the Downs above Brighton, both his own and those of other men, for his "way with a horse" and his good hands were generally appreciated among his brother officers. Willie loved these early morning gallops on the Downs, and on one occasion, he rode off soon after daybreak on his steeplechaser, Early Bird, for a gallop on the race

course. At the early parade that morning Willie was missing, and, as inquiries were being made as to his whereabouts, a trooper reported that Early Bird had just been brought in dead lame, and bleeding profusely from a gash in the chest.

He had been found limping his way down the hill from the race-course. Willie's brother officers immediately set out to look for him, and found him lying unconscious some twenty yards from a chain across the course which was covered with blood, and evidently the cause of the mishap. They got him down to the barracks on a stretcher, and there he lay with broken ribs and concussion of the brain.

He told us afterwards that he was going at a hard gallop, and neither he nor Early Bird had seen the chain till they were right on it, too late to jump. There had never been a chain up before, and he had galloped over the same course on the previous morning.

I was at Rivenhall when I heard of the accident to Willie, and for six unhappy weeks I did little else than watch for news of him. My sister, Lady Barrett-Lennard, and Sir Thomas had gone to Preston Barracks to nurse him, and as soon as it was possible they moved him to their own house in Brighton. For six weeks he lay unconscious, and then at last the good news came that he was better, and that they were going to take him to Belhus to convalesce.

A great friend of Willie's, also in the 18th—Robert Cunninghame Graham—was invited down to keep him amused, and my sister, Mrs. Steele, and I met them in London and went down to Belhus with them. Willie

was looking very ill, and was tenderly cared for by his friend Graham. He was too weak to speak, but, while driving to Belhus, he slipped a ring from his finger on to mine and pressed my hand under cover of the rugs.

Robert Cunninghame Graham, uncle of Robert Bontine Cunninghame Graham, the Socialist writer and traveller, walked straight into our hearts, so gay, so careful of Willie was he, and so utterly *bon camarade*, that we seemed to have known him for years. In a few days Anna and I left Belhus, and Willie's father came over from Ireland to stay with him till he was completely recovered.

Before Willie left I was back at Belhus on the occasion of a dinner party, and was shyly glad to meet him again and at his desire to talk to me only.

While the others were all occupied singing and talking after dinner we sat on the yellow damask sofa, and he slipped a gold and turquoise locket on a long gold and blue enamel chain round my neck. It was a lovely thing, and I was very happy to know how much Willie cared for me.

CHAPTER V

A MEMORY OF BRIGHTON

> " *But, oh! the fresh winds of the sea,*
> *That rush'd and roar'd o'er the scudding tide;*
> *And oh! for those hours so wildly free*
> *When we stood there side by side.*"—A. C. STEELE.

MY sister Anna and I went down to Brighton for change of air to our sister, Lady Lennard's house. She and Sir Thomas were away, and we were in proud possession of the great, tall house and an old caretaker, who was to look after us.

We were very happy by the sea all day, and in the evening well amused by Mr. Cunninghame Graham, who was now back at Preston Barracks, having left Willie in his father's care at Belhus.

Cunninghame Graham was solemnly invited to come to "dinner" whenever he liked, and my sister and I were interested observers of his expression when he first came. Anna and I had decided that we loved breakfast and hated dinner, so, having no one to please but ourselves, we "dined" as we breakfasted, on bacon and eggs and such sort of early-morning food.

Mr. Graham was, after the first shock, good enough to say he liked our late breakfast, and certainly he assisted at our simple feast very frequently. Looking

back, I think he was very greatly attracted by my sister Anna, though, as she was already married, his suit was hopeless.

In the evening we used to walk in the Lewes Crescent Gardens, where the scent of the wallflowers and the drowsy swash of the sea lulled us into desire for sleep.

One evening when my sister and I were preparing for bed there was a sound of something falling on the balcony. Half laughing, and half frightened, we peeped out, and there espied two lovely bouquets of flowers. They had evidently been flung up from the road below.

After a breathless consultation we cautiously peered over the balcony, and saw two young men—apparently gentlemen—gazing up to see the effect of their floral bombardment. We hastily fled back into the drawing-room and bolted the window, with some vague idea that such adventurous spirits might turn into twin Romeos.

We must have looked very funny sitting up in bed that night, clasping our bouquets and bubbling with laughter at our unsought conquest.

The next evening, each trying her best to appear unconcerned, we hung about before going to bed, listening for the gentle thud of flowers on the balcony. Again two bouquets were flung up, and we snatched them in, slamming and bolting the window, and shaking with laughter.

This became a nightly experience for a week or more, and then Anna's curiosity could bear it no longer. We dressed her up as a maid with cap and

apron and muffled her face up to "keep her toothache from the wind." The flowers used to arrive in boxes now, and were taken out of these and flung up to the balcony by the same young men nightly.

At a signal from me, when I spied the two cavaliers rounding the corner of the street, the "maid" opened the front door and went stiffly along, as an elderly maid should, to "post some letters." As we had hoped, the two men fell at once into the trap, and besought the maid to take the flowers in to her young ladies.

She was properly shocked at such a suggestion, and said it was as much as her place was worth if it got to "My Lady's" ears. They assured her that the flowers were acceptable to the young ladies and that her lady's ears need not be assailed by the knowledge, that the flowers had been taken in every evening, and that it would be made worth her while to do them such a little service. She exclaimed at the deceitfulness of the young ladies—"their ma away and all"—wavered and capitulated, staggering into the door armed with two enormous bouquets, a handsome tip and a whole packet of verses.

I hastily shut the door behind her, and she fell into my arms helpless with laughter. I was half cross at having been out of the fun, but soon we were both rocking with laughter over the "poetry," and planning how to restore the "tip" without getting into further mischief.

The men's cards were in the bouquets, and from these we learned that they were brothers, belonged to a good London club, and meant to pursue us to

the end. We met them frequently out of doors in the daytime, but never by word or sign recognised them, nor allowed them to show their desire to salute us.

Anna and I were young and light-hearted in those days, but would have been horrified at the idea of allowing these young men to make our acquaintance in such a way.

When I contrast the girls of my youth with those of the present day I think we were more modest, and decidedly more attractive!

When we told our mother (Lady Wood) about the bouquets and the rest she was much shocked at the thought of the expense the bouquets must have been, and when the young fellows were discovered in the grounds at Rivenhall, waiting again with messages for the "maid," she had them sternly warned off, and yet, with her characteristic dislike of our being under any obligation to anyone, sent each amorous one a present.

Our mother tried to show us the indiscretion of our behaviour, but I would only demurely describe the gallant appearance of the "tall one," who admired me most, while Anna would chuckle out "as much as my place is worth if it comes to M'lady's ears."

Soon Anna and I were startled out of our girlish nonsense at Brighton by receiving a telegram giving news of our mother being dangerously ill. The message came long after the last train had gone to London, and in an agony of suspense, we decided to walk to the station in the early morning and try to get to London by a workman's train.

When we got to the station we found that there were no means of getting to town until much later. We were in despair, as our mother was said to be dying, and as there was a goods train on the point of departure Anna and I boldly climbed on to the cab of the engine and begged the driver and stoker to let us go up with them. Of course, they refused, but so half-heartedly, when we explained and they saw my tear-stained face, that we persisted. Still saying that he could not possibly do it the driver started the train, and he and the stoker found us a couple of sacks to sit upon, and kindly served us with their own hot coffee. It was very early morning in late autumn, long before it was light, and as we sat huddled together on the floor of the cab of the engine the weird journey, the rush through the dark night with only the flare of the engine's fire to light us, lessened the tension of our anxiety about our mother.

On arriving in London we caught a fast train to Rivenhall, and to our great relief found her better.

My mother and I went to Brighton again before the 18th Hussars left Preston Barracks. She hired a horse from the livery stable for me, so that Willie and I had long rides over the Downs together.

One day Evelyn came down, and brought his beautiful chestnut mare down with him. He let me ride her, and as we were getting on to the Downs he exclaimed, "You ought to be able to ride well by this time," and gave the already excited mare a flick with his whip. She galloped away with me, and I clung helplessly to her until, to my relief, she eventually found her way to her stables in the town.

My father soon wrote to say how dull he was without us, and we went home. I had become tired of the life at Brighton, and was glad to get home again.

Willie's father died in London early in the next year, and we did not meet for some time afterwards. I think I saw him next at a small dance I was taken to by some friends, and I did not recognise him at first, as, following the ugly fashion of the day, he had grown whiskers. He monopolised me the whole evening, and called at the house to see me the next day.

I had now known Willie very well for three years, but I was very young, and a curious distaste for my "love affair" had grown up within me. I felt a desire to be left free and untrammelled by any serious thoughts of marriage; and, though I had not grown to dislike Willie, I wished him away when he looked fondly at me, and half-consciously I longed to get back to the days when men were little more to me than persons to be avoided, as generally wanting something to be fetched or carried. I fancy my mother understood me better than anyone, for the day after the dance she interviewed Willie when he came; and I only remember a feeling of relief as he merely said good-bye to me in passing down the stairs, where I was childishly sitting, yawning violently to attain to the mistiness of outlook that I felt was expected of me!

With all the unreasonableness of girlhood I felt a sudden sense of regretful vanity that Willie's last glimpse of me then was while I was wearing a most unbecoming black silk jacket, much too large for me. It would have been so much more romantic to send

him away with an aching remembrance of my fresh young loveliness, perfectly gowned!

Willie, I heard, went to Valencia, and we saw nothing of him for a long time, though these pretty verses came to me from him:—

FAREWELL

1.

In lightly turning o'er this page, may pause
  A woman's hand awhile, which mine hath prest
In more than common clasp; for here I was
  More than a common guest.

2.

Here, at the casement whence, 'mid song and laughter
  We watch'd the buds whose bloom should deck thy hair,
Too wise to cast a more defined thereafter—
  Throughout a spring so fair.

3.

Alone, I write farewell within this book.
  The summer sun is streaming o'er the park;
Oh, for the sunshine of a last fond look
  Over a heart so dark!

4.

Farewell! I know not if a merry meeting
  For such a parting e'er shall make amend.
Harsh words have stung me; is their venom fleeting,
  Or hurtful to the end?

W. H. O'Shea.

CHAPTER VI

MY FATHER'S DEATH

"And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding."

THE following autumn my father, mother, and I went to stay at Belhus on a long visit, my father going to Cressing each week for the Sunday duty, and returning to us on Monday morning.

We all enjoyed spending Christmas at Belhus. My mother and my sister Emma were devoted to one another, and loved being together. We were a much larger party also at Belhus, and there were so many visitors coming and going that I felt it was all more cheerful than being at home.

Among other visitors that winter, I well remember Mr. John Morley—now Lord Morley—as he was told off to me to entertain during the day. He was a very brilliant young man, and my elders explained to me that his tense intellect kept them at too great a strain for pleasurable conversation. "You, dear Katie, don't matter, as no one expects you to know anything!" remarked my sister with cheerful kindness. So I calmly invited John Morley to walk with me, and, as we paced through the park from one lodge to the other, my companion talked to me so easily and readily that I forgot my rôle of "fool of the family," and responded most

intelligently to a really very interesting conversation. With the ready tact of the really clever, he could already adapt himself to great or small, and finding me simply ready to be interested, was most interesting, and I returned to my family happily conscious that I could now afford to ignore my brother Evelyn's advice to "look lovely and keep your mouth shut!"

John Morley, so far as I remember him then, was a very slight young man with a hard, keen face, the features strongly marked, and fair hair. He had (to me) a kindly manner, and did not consider it beneath him to talk seriously to a girl so young in knowledge, so excessively and shyly conscious of his superiority, and so much awed by my mission of keeping him amused and interested while my elders rested from his somewhat oppressive intellectuality. I remember wondering, in some alarm, as to what topic I should start if he suddenly stopped talking. But my fear was entirely groundless; he passed so easily from one thing interesting to me to another that I forgot to be self-conscious, and we discussed horses and dogs, books and their writers—agreeing that authors were, of all men, the most disappointing in appearance—my father, soldiers, and "going to London," with the greatest pleasure and mutual self-confidence. And I think that, after that enlightening talk, had I been told that in after years this suave, clever young man was to become—as Gladstone's lieutenant—one of my bitterest foes, I should perhaps have been interested, but utterly unalarmed, for I had in this little episode lost all awe of cleverness as such.

My father much enjoyed his stroll about the park

and his quiet hours of rest in the soft light of the drawing-room at Belhus while we waited for dinner. When Sir John was with him his kindly son-in-law always advanced the late hour he liked to dine to an earlier one more suited to my father's health, and the memory of never-failing kindly courtesies such as this were a comfort to remember, trivial as they may seem, as they soothed the everyday life of one who, unknown to ourselves, was slowly leaving us for ever. Soon my father had to give up his weekly visits to Cressing, and gradually we noticed that he became more feeble every day with the continued recurrence of low fever, which left him weakened to combat the sleepless, feverish nights. Then came a time when he could not bear to let me go out of his sight, and for a fortnight I did not leave him for a moment. He lay so still and quiet, with his finely chiselled face and white hair, and looked so grand and far above all the little things we prized for his comfort's sake.

At night I lay on a sofa at the foot of his great bed —one that Queen Elizabeth slept in when on her way from Tilbury to London. One morning he called me to bring some writing paper and write down what he dictated, and I did so. It was a letter to Mr. Gurdon Rebow about the forthcoming election, in which my father had taken a great interest. The next day I hoped that he was better, and he asked me for a hand-glass. I hesitated, as the look of approaching death was so evident to me, and I feared it would shock him to see how much his face had altered. He insisted, and I was obliged to comply lest he should understand why I feared to give it to him. He held



CAPTAIN O'SHEA

As a Cornet in the 18th Hussars

the glass in his now feeble hand, and gazed long and earnestly at his face, then gave it back to me with a sigh.

He sank swiftly, and the days, which in other times might have appeared to pass slowly, when the serenity of such a peaceful life might have been monotonous, now passed all too soon.

Towards the end, Uncle William—afterwards Lord Hatherley (my father's brother)—came and prayed by my father's side. Kneeling by the bedside, holding my father's hand and mine in his, he whispered to me to say the Lord's Prayer with him. We said it together, my father, only just conscious, trying to follow. When we came to " Thy will be done " I was too choked with sobs to repeat, or to feel it, but my uncle was insistent, and a faint smile passed over my father's face as he tried to press his fingers in my hand. We waited by the bedside for some time, my uncle continuing to pray. Then my father's hand gently relaxed from mine in his last breath. I sank upon the bed by his side, and the doctor came in from the next room and carried me out. A sedative was poured down my throat, and I slept heavily, not moving again till I opened my eyes to see Willie and my sister bending over my bed.

Willie smiled at me, and pulled out of his pocket the loveliest little King Charles spaniel I had ever seen, and put it on the bed to distract me. I was too much worn out and miserable to wonder at the presence of Willie, whom I believed to be in Madrid, but contented myself with curling round in bed with my new treasure. Later I heard that Willie had been telegraphed for

by my mother and sister to come, as they feared that, after my long attendance on my father, I should fall ill when he died.

Willie had to return to Spain almost at once, and we were a very sad house party—my mother white and thin and terribly broken down by my father's death. I used to sit at the piano hour after hour playing to her, and the day before my father was buried I sat extemporising at the piano to prevent her hearing the tramping of the men who were taking my father's coffin up the stairs to the room where he lay. My brother-in-law had the coffin made from an old oak tree out of the Belhus park.

Some weeks later I went home to Rivenhall by my mother's request to look for some things she wanted out of my father's library and to destroy his papers and sermons, as I had promised him before he died. I felt some difficulty in this, as I feared to set light to the old house in burning the papers. At last I took them down to the lake in the cold winter evening and watched them as they slowly sank, heavily weighted with stones, but only to come to the surface again in distant and darker shadows. The moorhens and wild fowl rose with weird cries as they found their shelter molested. This occupied me far into the night and I returned heart-sick to the house where my father's cheery smile and genial presence would greet me no more. The hall was only lit by the fire of the dying logs, and the large house seemed cold and desolate. The shadows of the spreading branches of the cedar outside the drawing-room, trailing their long length across the lawn and over the window, the smell of the thickly-falling spikes

giving place to new and telling of half-awakened spring filled me with pain and loneliness.

The loss of my father was my first real sorrow, and I wandered miserably round his study, where everything was as he had left it, including the things he had so lately touched—the letter-weight, pressed down on the answered letters and those now never to be answered; his sermon case; his surplice folded on his table ready for the next services at the Church, now for him never to take place. I felt that I could not bear the sadness and longing for him, and as soon as I could I returned to the warmer glow of the family circle at Belhus. There I found that the vexed question of ways and means—always a vexed question in a clergyman's household when the head of the house dies—was pressing heavily on my mother, who was left almost penniless by my father's death.

My mother and sisters were still discussing what was best to be done, and my mother was speaking sadly as I went into her room. "We must sell the cow, and, of course, the pig," my eldest sister (Emma) replied in her sweet, cheerful voice, which produced a little laugh, though a rather dismal one, and our sorrow was chased away for the moment.

My mother's sister, Mrs. Benjamin Wood, on hearing of her troubles, settled a yearly income on her, thus saving her from all future anxiety, most of her children being provided for under our grandfather's—old Sir Matthew Wood's—will.

CHAPTER VII

MY MARRIAGE

"*Fair shine the day on the house with open door;*
Birds come and cry there and twitter in the chimney,
But I go for ever and come again no more."—STEVENSON.

MY father died in February, 1866, and during that year we lived chiefly at Rivenhall. It was a very quiet, sad year, but we had a few pleasant visitors. Sir George Dasent, of the *Times*, and also Mr. Dallas, who wrote leading articles for the same paper, were frequent visitors, and Mr. Chapman (of Chapman and Hall, publishers), with pretty Mrs. Chapman, Mr. Lewes, and many other literary people were very welcome guests. My mother and sister Anna (Mrs. Steele) were writing books, and much interested in all things literary. At the end of the year we joined my eldest sister and her husband at Brighton, and soon after this Willie returned from Spain and called on us at once, with the ever-faithful Cunninghame Graham. I now yielded to Willie's protest at being kept waiting longer, and we were married very quietly at Brighton on January 25, 1867. I narrowly escaped being married to Mr. Cunninghame Graham by mistake, as Willie and he—the "best man"—had got into wrong positions. It was only Mr. Graham's horrified "No, no, *no*," when asked whether he would have

"this woman" to be his wife, that saved us from many complications.

My mother, brothers and sisters gave me beautiful presents, and my dear sister Emma gave me my trousseau, while Willie himself gave me a gold-mounted dressing-bag. My old Aunt H. sent me a gold and turquoise bracelet. Willie saw this after I had shown him what my sister Mrs. Steele had given me—a carbuncle locket with diamond centre. Aunt H. was a very wealthy woman, my sister not at all well off, though in any case her present would have been much more to me than that of Aunt H. However, Willie merely remarked of Anna's gift: "That is lovely, darling, and this," taking up Aunt H.'s bracelet, "*this* will do for the dog," snapped it round the neck of my little Prince.

Long afterwards he and I went to call on Aunt H., and as usual I had Prince under my arm. I noticed Aunt H. break off in a sentence, and fix a surprised and indignant eye on my dog. I had forgotten all about Prince's collar being Aunt H.'s bracelet, and only thought she did not like my bringing the dog to call, till I caught Willie's eye. He had at once taken in the situation, and became so convulsed with laughter that I hastily made my adieu and hustled him off.

Sir Seymour Fitzgerald lent us Holbrook Hall for our honeymoon, a kindness that proved unkind, as the pomp and ceremony entailed by a large retinue of servants for our two selves were very wearisome to me. There was little or no occupation for us, as the weather was too bad to get out much; our kind host had naturally not lent us his hunters, and we were,

or Willie was, too much in awe of the conventions to ask anyone to come and relieve our ennui. Indeed, I think that no two young people were ever more rejoiced than we were when we could return to the life of the sane without comment.

Willie had sold out of the army just before his marriage, and his Uncle John, who had married a Spanish lady and settled in Madrid, offered Willie a partnership in his bank, O'Shea and Co., if he would put the £4,000 he received for his commission, into it. This was too good an offer to be refused, so I said good-bye to my people, and bought some little presents for the servants at home, including a rich silk dress for my old nurse Lucy, who had been in my mother's service since the age of sixteen, and who was much upset that her youngest and dearest nursling should be taken away to such " heathenish, far-off places."

Before leaving England Willie and I stayed for a few days in London, and his mother and sister Mary called on us. They had not attended the marriage, as they would not lend their countenance to a "mixed" marriage, though once accomplished they accepted the situation. They were very nice and kind, and so gently superior that at once I became politely antagonistic. They brought me some beautiful Irish poplins which were made into gowns to wear in Madrid to impress the Spanish cousins, and a magnificent emerald bracelet, besides £200 worth of lovely Irish house-linen. My mother-in-law and sister-in-law were most generous indeed, and I then, and always, acknowledged them to be thoroughly good, kind-hearted women, but so hidebound with what was, to me, bigotry, with con-

ventionality and tactlessness, that it was really a pain to me to be near them. They admired me, and very plainly disapproved of me; I admired them for their Parisian finish—(for want of a better term)—and for their undoubted goodness, but, though I was rather fond of Mary, they wearied me to death.

That week we crossed over to Boulogne, and there we had to stay for a few days, as I was too ill from the crossing to go farther. Then we went to Paris, and the second morning Willie, seeing I was better, wanted to go out to *déjeuner*, and told me to lie still in bed, and he would tell them to send a maid with my food, as he knew that I, not being used to French customs, would not like a waiter to bring it. To make sure of my not being disturbed he locked the door. To my horror half an hour after he had gone there was a tap at the door, and a manservant opened it with his key, and marched in, despite my agitated protests in very home-made French. Once in, however, he made me so comfortable by his deft arrangement of a most tempting meal and paternal desire that "Madame should eat and recover herself," that I was able to laugh at Willie's annoyance on his return to find the waiter once more in possession and removing the tray.

We then went to Paris to stay with my mother-in-law and Mary for a few days, while they found me a French maid and showed me the sights. I had a great quantity of very long hair in those days, and Willie insisted on my having it very elaborately dressed—much to my annoyance—in the latest French fashion, which I did not consider becoming to me. My maid

was also much occupied in making the toilet of my little dog. He was a lovely little creature, and Caroline would tie an enormous pale blue bow on him as a reward for the painful business of combing him. From the time Willie gave me this little dog to the day it died, about six years afterwards, it went everywhere with me. He was as good and quiet as possible when with me, but if I ever left him for a moment the shrill little howls would ring out till the nearest person to him would snatch him up, and fly to restore him to his affectionate, though long-suffering, mistress.

At Paris there was trouble with my mother-in-law and Mary at once because of him. They took me to see Notre Dame, and as a matter of course Prince was in my arm under my cloak. As we came out I let my little dog down to run, and the Comtesse nearly fainted. "You took the dog into the *church!* Oh, Katie, how wrong, how *could* you! Mary! what shall we do? Do you not think——?" and turning a reproachful glance on me, Mary responded, "Come, mother," and, leaving me amazed and indignant on the steps, they passed into Notre Dame again. With some curiosity I peeped in after them, and beheld them kneeling at prayer just inside the door. They came out almost at once, and the old Comtesse looked happier. "You did not understand, dear," said Mary kindly, "it is better not to take the little dog into a church." I was young enough to resent being told I did not understand, and promptly returned, "I understand, Mary, that you and the Comtesse consider it wicked to take Prince into Notre Dame. Well, I don't, and you must excuse me if I remind you that

God made the dog; and I seem to remember something about a Child that was born in a stable with a lot of nice friendly beasts about, so you need not have gone back to pray about me and Prince, I think!" And, scooping up Prince, I stalked off with a dignity that was rather spoilt by my not having sufficient French to find my own way home, and having to wait at the carriage for them. We drove home with much stiffness, and only thawed sufficiently to assure Willie how much we had enjoyed ourselves!

While I was abroad I often used to get away by myself to spend many happy hours in the beautiful churches with Prince tucked under my arm, and often a friendly old priest would give us a smile as he passed on his way about the church, so it was apparently not a very deadly sin to take him with me.

Willie's mother and Mary became more reconciled to the little dog when they found how much admired he was in Paris. An old Frenchman, after seeing him one evening as Willie and I were leaving table d'hôte, made inquiries as to where we were staying, and called on Willie to offer £100 for "madame's pet" if at any time she wished to sell him. Willie was too wise to approach me with the offer, and assured monsieur that madame would consider the offer an insult only to be wiped out in monsieur's blood!

Happy in the knowledge that I looked extremely pretty in the gift—and peace offering—of my sister-in-law, a Parisian bonnet, exactly the size and shape of a cheese plate, made of white lace, wreathed with pink roses and tied under my chin with pale blue ribbon (the very latest fashion of the moment), we

said good-bye to the Comtesse, Mary, and their friends and went on to Biarritz. Our bedroom and sitting-room here looked out over the sea, and my delight was great when I found that the great waves were breaking on the rocks just under the French windows of my bedroom. My pleasure in this was much intensified a few days after arrival, as I developed whooping cough, and had to lie in bed for weeks with that and pneumonia. The English doctor had some difficulty in patching me up, but all through I was conscious of the roar of the waves as they hurled themselves against the beach and covered my window with spray. The sound of the sea soothed me to sleep when opiates could not, and in the restless dawn I was wakened by the jingle of the bells on the donkeys as they were driven in to the hotel yard to be milked. These donkeys were driven in from Bayonne, as asses' milk was the only nourishment I could take then.

While I was getting better a chambermaid of the hotel, a Basque girl, who was my devoted nurse throughout my illness, would talk to me in her native patois of her hopes and fears, and of what she and her lover meant to do when they could marry. I used to love her pretty, kind face and her well-brushed brown hair, in which was twisted a bright coloured handkerchief, in the fashion of her country.

My convalescence was a pleasant time, and I could have lived on the great red cherries my kindly nurse brought in such quantities. We parted with real regret, and I gave the girl a beautiful ring off my finger, greatly pleasing her kind heart thereby.

Willie, on the long walks he took during my

illness, made some really good sketches of the places around Biarritz, and when I was able to go out we took long drives in the neighbourhood through winding wooded roads, the sea showing its boundless grandeur through the tall trees on the broken cliff.

The Duc de San Luca, a cousin of Willie's, used to come in the evening to play to me. He was a fine musician, and his beautiful touch used to make even the not too good piano of the hotel sing with greater sweetness and power than it could have known before.

The Duc de San Luca was at that time a handsome man, with clear-cut features and curly white hair. He had great charm of manner, and, like so many of the O'Sheas, had much of the elaborate courtesy of the foreigner combined with the charming friendliness of the Irishman. Though no longer young, he was a noted athlete, and showed me with some pride where for a wager he had swum from headland to headland, tossed in the rough Atlantic sea. It was a feat of great endurance, and one that no other man had succeeded in till then.

On our journey to Madrid the scenery interested me greatly, the lank fir trees with cups tied on them to catch the exudations of resin, the vineyards with all their profusion of promise, with the glorious sunrise and the curious "halt" of sunset were wonderful to my untravelled mind.

As the train neared Hendaye I awakened to the most exquisite sunrise I have ever seen, vivid hues of crimson-purple, blue and orange-grey bathing the town, with its distant fringe of trees, in a flood of light, and crowning the shadowed mountains in glory.

CHAPTER VIII

LIFE IN MADRID

"Lending the colour of romance
To every trivial circumstance."

On our arrival at Madrid in the evening we were met, to my annoyance, by many of my new Spanish relations. I was very tired, having been in the train for two days and nights, and felt dusty and untidy in an old lace bonnet with a red rose stuck rakishly on one side. Prince, my little dog, was also very tired, and disinclined to respond with any cheerfulness to the Spanish tongue which assailed us on every side.

Willie's aunt, Isabella O'Shea, a handsome, stout woman with large dark eyes and a kindly manner, and her two daughters were there. They, of course, were cool and fresh, and their pretty lace mantillas contrasted well with my dusty train-worn headgear.

They embraced me affectionately and promptly introduced a tall, regular-featured Spaniard as *the* great doctor of Madrid. I supposed he must be another cousin, and looked at Willie for enlightenment. He, however, only looked annoyed, and suggested making a start for our hotel.

On arrival my aunt told me, through Willie, that, as she was sure I should be very tired, she had asked Dr. —— to come to meet us, and to see me after I

was in bed. I fear our interview must have proved unsatisfactory, as he could only speak Spanish, and I was too cross and tired even to try to remember the little that Willie had taught me. Willie at last came to the rescue and drove him off, letting in the aunt and cousins, who all kissed me again. They were the last straw, and I said, with a polite smile to Willie: "If you don't take all these people away at once I shall howl." He frantically told his aunt that he was hungry, and with little cries and guttural sounds of consternation they took him away to feed him and left me in peace.

When all was quiet in the hotel and street, and Willie, back again, was sleeping peacefully, I crept out of bed into our sitting-room, glad to look about in the bright moonlight, now I was free from the presence of so many strangers. I opened the balcony window, and the noise I made, though very slight, was sufficient to startle the wild dogs in the street feeding on the refuse flung out from the houses. They looked so starved and miserable as they gazed up at me, snarling and showing their very white teeth, that I thought they must be wolves from the mountains rather than dogs. At daylight they stole off to their hiding places, and never approached anyone, or suffered themselves to be touched.

The next morning I was up early, anxious to see the city where all was new to me. Willie told me that —as was the custom in Madrid in the hot weather— our relatives would not be visible till the evening. He tried to curb my ardour by quoting a Spanish proverb, "Only the English and dogs go out in the

day," but it did not depress me, and I insisted that I would join the "dogs" at once. He pointed out that he did not want to get up, and that Spanish girls did not go out unchaperoned. By the time I had assured him that marriage made a difference, and that anyhow I was English, not Spanish, he was asleep again, and I slipped out to explore.

Downstairs I found a man with melancholy eyes, to whom I let off a sentence that Willie had taught me, as being always likely to produce a sufficiency of food if I was alone and hungry in Spain. The melancholy one bowed profoundly, and I waited with some nervousness to see what would happen in the way of food. Another waiter came, bowed, and said something which sounded reproachful, though polite, but I firmly repeated my sentence, and, after another bow and a helpless rolling of the eyes, he also disappeared. In a few moments a delicious meal arrived—hot coffee, eggs, poached with a peculiar cage pattern over them, and French rolls. So I had a very good meal, quite undisturbed by the quiet peeps and guttural whispers of the servants, who passed constantly by the door to see the mad English señora who insisted on making a good breakfast.

Then, after a long wandering, from the radiance of the Puerta del Sol to the Carrera de San Jerónimo leading to light and open spaces, I found the streets, that had been so full of life when we drove from the station the evening before, absolutely deserted, except for a few men, chiefly gaily-dressed peasants in from the mountains, lying asleep in the shadow of the doorways.

The pavements seemed to burn my feet, though the air did not feel so breathless to me as on a hot day at home, and I eventually found shelter in the Prado Gallery. The fashionable time for walking in the Prado was from midnight onwards, and Willie had joined his relations the night before, so I knew I could count on a long morning to myself among the pictures.

That evening, after Willie had expressed satisfaction at my attire of bright blue poplin and of the diamond star in my hair, we strolled up to the Puerta del Sol to the cousins' house, and found the porter and his wife taking their evening meal, consisting apparently of little else than garlic, in their stone room at the entrance of the house. They eagerly welcomed me as the new relation of the Señor and Señora whom they served, and then allowed us to proceed upstairs, ringing a bell to announce our coming. On our arrival upstairs a large door was flung open, and I was presented to those of the cousins I had not seen before and a crowd of their friends.

It was a very large party invited to honour me, and they were all most warm in their greetings, the ladies kissing me on the cheek and the men my hand. I was pleased and excited at my reception, but rather bored at the amount of embracing I had to go through. These cousins of his were very fond of Willie, and I was naturally gratified at their very obvious admiration of his bride. The strangeness of the scene made me feel gay and animated, and enabled me to throw off the shyness which would otherwise have overcome

me in being the centre of interest to all these strangers whose language I did not understand.

The two daughters were very graceful girls, and the eyes of the elder, Margharita, were a perfect glow in her face. She was very lovely and wholly Spanish in appearance, though without that touch of heaviness in the lower part of the face that so many Spanish women have. The younger sister, Pepita, was more facile in expression, but, though pretty, did not possess the striking beauty of Margharita. She was much more lively than her sister, who was in a state of dreamy happiness at the presence of the young Spaniard to whom she was about to be betrothed.

Of all the boy cousins who were present—the eldest, Guielmo, being away with his regiment—I was particularly charmed by Enrico, a dark, handsome lad, who came forward and offered me a crimson carnation, to the delighted approval of his family. He, like the rest, could only speak Spanish, but he did not even do that, only with the most charming air of homage presented the flower, and, though flushing rather hotly at the noisy approval of his relations, retired gracefully and unabashed.

Willie interpreted, but they were all so kind it was easy to make myself understood. The only one of the family who reminded me of their Irish blood was a younger boy, Juan, I think, who had very fair hair and skin and very blue eyes.

John O'Shea, the father, was a typical Irishman, with curly brown-grey hair and Irish blue eyes, a good-looking man of quick wit and attractive smile. He was an inveterate gambler, and his card-playing

for heavy stakes was a perpetual distress to his Spanish wife and all the family, though he was an extraordinarily good player, and his luck proverbial. His fear of cholera was an obsession with him, and Willie had told me not to mention the word in his presence. A necessary warning, as rumours of cholera were as prevalent in that year as those of the expected revolution, and made an easy topic of conversation.

I created quite a sensation in a mild way at dinner by asking for salt, as I was quite unconscious that at that time the tax on it in Spain was so great that salt was portioned out with the greatest care, even in the wealthiest families.

I remember I spoke with horror to Willie, that night, of the table manners of his relations, and he was much amused, informing me that the sanitary habits of the toothpick and of washing out the mouth after dinner were a national custom both for men and women. During my stay in Spain I found it was so, but I never became reconciled to it.

Earlier in the evening of next day, in mantillas and armed with fans, my aunt and cousins took me to see the various places of interest. Willie showed me the palace where Queen Isabella still reigned, and where, much to my astonishment, weeds were growing up between the flagstones of the courtyard, and we waited to see Her Majesty as she drove out with her beautifully strong, well-groomed mules in their richly coloured harness. The trappings of the old-world usage were always popular, and raised enthusiasm wherever the Queen drove, her people willing to be pleased with externals as long as they could.

I much admired the grace of the women and the dark, animated beauty of their eyes and the flash of white teeth as they smiled in greeting. The men did not appeal to me so much, and compared to disadvantage, in my eyes, with Englishmen and Irishmen; but the women fascinated me.

My poor little dog hated these walks, as the Spaniards walk so slowly, and Prince would have been ruthlessly trodden upon if I had not carried him in the crowd. He had been so spoilt in France and suffered from the lack of appreciation he met with from the Spanish.

I was introduced to Robert Owens, another cousin of Willie's. He was altogether Irish, and looked it, and, though a charming acquaintance, was only noteworthy as being the only man, Willie said, who *would* drink beer—and much beer—in Spain. The air, so pure and rarefied, seems to take away all desire for strong drink, and I remember that I never saw anyone in the slightest degree the worse for it during my stay in Spain. Willie, who knew Madrid—and most of Spain—as well as he knew London, told me that he had only once seen a drunken man in Spain, and he was an Irishman.

The political horizon was very black in Madrid at this time, and there was constant unrest among the people. Even the mere discussion of politics led to interesting little mock revolutions in cabarets, at street corners, in the regiments, and in the schools; and more than once, while we were walking quietly in the Prado, shots and wild cries rang out, and in sudden panic the gay promenaders would fly in all directions.

One evening a volley of bullets fell among us, and Willie, catching up Prince and seizing my hand, made me run hard up queer little side streets to our hotel.

As we were passing up to our rooms we were told that two ministerial buildings had been attacked; and there was much galloping of soldiers through the streets, while the Prime Minister went past at the head of a troop. Willie went out only to find all quiet, and this slight outbreak of the Republicans over. These little disturbances became very frequent before we left Spain, but they did not cause me much alarm, as I was sufficiently young to consider it all very picturesque and interesting.

About this time Margharita O'Shea was formally betrothed to her future husband, and Willie and I attended the ceremony. There was a very large gathering of relations and friends. She looked very lovely, but pale as usual, and the crimson carnations I pinned into her hair made the contrast needed to render her strikingly beautiful. The ceremony was very simple, the bride and bridegroom-elect plighting their troth, and, after the festivities, returning to their parents' homes.

My favourite walk was to the Retiro, where the gardens were very large and beautiful, the acacia trees in full bloom filling the air with delicious scent. These gardens were wilder and the air purer, I thought, than in the rest of Madrid, being nearer the desert and the mountain of the Guadarrama. Pretty, slight, dark-eyed children used to play there; and Willie, who was fond of children, used to wish he might have many, though I was too young to find them interesting.

On the eve of Ash Wednesday (Shrove Tuesday) we went to the Prado, where pancakes were being fried under the trees. The oil was of the rankest, and the smell horrible, but I managed to eat a pancake to please my Catholic friends. It was a very interesting scene, the well-dressed people and the peasants all mingled together eating the greasy pancakes that they would not have touched at their own table. Beautiful women in their soft draperies and white and black lace mantillas, the waving fans and the handsome dress of the peasants made an animated picture I have never forgotten.

Only very occasionally in those days did the French bonnet obtrude itself, and the beautiful dress of the country was not spoilt by any attempt to graft French fashions on to it. I was delighted with the mantilla, and found so many Spanish women were as fair as I that I could easily pass, in my mantilla, for a Spaniard. The then belle of society in Madrid was very fair, with golden hair and glorious dark eyes.

Now occurred my first real quarrel with Willie, though, on looking back upon the incident, I can see that a little more humour on my part and sympathy on his would have saved much bitterness.

An elderly Spaniard had paid me much attention for some time, and, being very unsophisticated in those days, I thought that his compliments and gifts of flowers were merely the usual kindnesses of a fussy old man. In fact, I regarded him as a tiresome, though kind, old bore, and was as shocked as astonished when, one evening in the Prado, he proposed, in a wealth of

compliment of which I could not comprehend the half, that I should tie a long blue ribbon to my balcony the next day when Willie was out, as a signal for him to come to my rooms. I was furiously angry, and, of course, forgot every word of Spanish that I knew. Willie came past at that moment, walking with one of the other ladies of our party, and I unceremoniously took his arm, and said I must go home at once. Of course Willie took me home, but he was annoyed at the suddenness of my action, and when I burst out that I had been grossly insulted by his old friend he laughed, and told me not to be so imaginative. Recriminations followed, and a bad quarrel was the finish to what had been a very pleasant day.

I was very angry, and did not sleep well, and when I rose late in the afternoon of the following day I found that Willie had gone out. I was looking rather mournfully out of my window when I saw the flutter of a blue ribbon on the opposite balcony. For a moment I drew back in disgust, then a happy thought seized me and, dashing into my bedroom, I pulled out several yards of pale blue ribbon which I cut into long lengths. Stepping out on to the balcony, I looked carefully and ostentatiously up and down the street before tying each ribbon to one of the ornamental heads of the balcony. This done to my satisfaction, I threw on my mantilla and ran downstairs, only stopping to leave a message with the porter to the effect that if the Señor ——— called he was to be told that Señor O'Shea awaited his visit with pleasure and yards of ribbon on a stick. Then I fled along to the cousins, and inveigled them into spending a happy

evening among my beloved owls on the way to the Manzanares.

I never knew what happened between the Señor —— and Willie, but when I was escorted back to the hotel by my friends Willie was home, very amiable, and the ribbons had gone from the balcony. I did see the elderly Don Juan again, but he had become absolutely blind so far as seeing either myself or Willie was concerned.

When we had been in Spain for nearly a year there was some dispute about the business arrangements of Willie's partnership in his uncle's bank, and Willie withdrew altogether from the affair. We then decided to return to England.

Though glad to go home, I parted from the Spanish relations with regret, and have always since my visit to them thought that the admixture of Irish and Spanish blood is most charming in result.

CHAPTER IX

OUR HOME AT BENNINGTON

"How hard their lot, who
Neither won nor lost."—J. BEATTIE.

ON our return to England we lived in Clarges Street, London, for some time, while Willie was looking for a place in the country where he could start a stud farm. Willie was very fond of horses, and understood them well, and I was delighted at the idea of his getting some really good brood mares and breeding race-horses; we knowing, of course, nothing of the enormous expense and many losses such an undertaking was certain to entail.

At last we decided to take Bennington Park, Hertfordshire, and on going there Willie bought some good blood stock, among the pick of which were Alice Maud, Scent, and Apricot.

Bennington was a pretty place, with two fine avenues of trees in a small park leading up to a comfortable house, and when we arrived the park was a carpet of snowdrops. A lovely rose-walk led to the glasshouses and kitchen gardens. On one side of the house were the stables, and after them the long rows of loose boxes, the groom's and gardener's cottages. The paddocks opened on and adjoined the park, and the pasture was well suited to young stock.

Soon we had all the boxes tenanted, and I spent many happy hours petting the lovely thoroughbred mares with their small velvety noses and intelligent eyes.

When the foals began to arrive I spent most of my time in the paddocks with these dainty ladies, who led a life of luxury sauntering about the meadows—their funny and ungainly, though beautifully made foals running by their sides, or trotting merrily in front to impede the progress of the mares. I used to give the foals bowls of warm milk, and they would come with their uncertain, clumsy young gallop to meet me directly I appeared.

We had great hope of a foal of Alice Maud's, and Willie would talk with the utmost confidence of the racing victories that would be ours with Harpalyce, the son of Gladiator, a confidence that proved sadly misplaced.

My little pony was sent from Rivenhall, and I found her very useful trotting through the Hertfordshire lanes to return the calls of the county people, as the mare Brunette which Willie gave me to drive in the T-cart was not considered safe for me to drive alone, and I found it irksome to have a servant always with me.

By now I had my old nurse Lucy from Rivenhall to live with me, and she was so glad to be with me once more that I promised her that she should never leave me again. She did not, till she died at a great age, years afterwards. Lucy was a splendid type of the old-fashioned and most faithful servant. Absolutely devoted to me, respecting Willie as belonging to

me, she loathed my French maid from the bottom of her jealous old heart. Caroline had a tolerant shrug of the shoulders and an "O, la, la," kept expressly for Lucy's benefit, and this seemingly harmless expression used to make the old lady shake with anger that she was far too gentle to express. I used to take Lucy with me in the pony-cart, much to her pride, though she was sure that it would end in a violent death for us both. This dear old soul was generous to her finger-tips, and when Willie and I came upon hard times he came to me one day and said: "That dear old fool came and poured her stockingful of savings out on my table, and ran away before I could catch her!" I have met with the greatest devotion and kindness all my life from my servants, but Lucy was the dearest of them all.

Willie was much away from home, at races, etc.; but, having a first-rate stud-groom and twenty "lads," the live-stock was very carefully tended. I had to walk round every day when Willie was away, and report on their condition to him. There was a stallion named Blue Mantle, who was subject to "moods" occasionally, and would vent his temper on his attendant with vicious teeth and sudden wicked "down-cuts" of his forefeet, and on these occasions Selby, the head man, would ask me to come and soothe the beautiful brute, who was as gentle as a lamb with me.

Willie's sporting friends often came home with him, and most of the sporting world of that day were welcome visitors to Bennington. One young man, Sir William Call, was a particularly welcome friend, and among others I have a warm remembrance of Sir

Charles Nugent and Mr. Reginald Herbert and his wife, the latter a very sporting little lady, who was an inveterate smoker, a habit unusual among women at that time. Captain Douglas-Lane gave me a beautiful white cat, "Haymaker," which spent a happy life sleeping upon the back of any horse that happened to be at home.

The Rowlands, who used to train at Epsom, kept some mares with us; they were particularly charming people, with whom we sometimes stayed for the Epsom race meetings. I remember getting into trouble with some of the local ladies by spending several evenings in playing chess with a fellow-visitor there—a famous tenor who, after singing his song of courtesy due, would retire into gloomy silence, guarding his precious voice in a corner until I took pity on his loneliness (for an artiste is rather out of his element in a sporting house party), and played many games of chess with him.

I never knew how Signor Campibello (plain Mr. Campbell to his friends) got there, but I know he was most grateful for the quiet evenings of chess—and so was I.

The chief form of social intercourse in the county was the giving of long, heavy, and most boring dinners. People thought nothing of driving eight or even ten miles (and there were no motor-cars then) to eat their dinner in each other's houses, and this form of entertainment used to produce such an absolutely painful boredom in me that I frequently hid the invitations from Willie, who liked to "keep up with the county."

I did not mind giving the dinners so much, for I used to "mix people horribly," as Willie said, and it was rather amusing to send a stiff and extremely conventional "county" madame, blazing with diamonds and uninspiring of conversation, in to dinner with a cheery sporting man of no particular lineage and a fund of racy anecdote. I think, too, that this sort of thing must have been good for both.

It also used to make me happy to give some of the accompanying daughters a good time among the "ineligible" men we had about. Men, mostly, without "two sixpences to rub together," but nevertheless very gay-hearted and pleasant companions; a change for the dear prim girls, whose brothers made such a point of being "away," except in the shooting seasons, that the girls—and so many girls—had no natural companionship with young men at all. The mothers fussed, and Willie besought me to be more careful, but the girls enjoyed themselves, and that any reasonable human being should enjoy a "county" dinner party is an achievement of which any young hostess may be proud.

On looking back I think that Willie and I must have been of great interest to all these dull people. The horses were, of course, a perpetual interest, and we were, I think, sought after socially from my very disinclination to conform to the generally accepted modes of amusement.

Willie and I were a good-looking young couple, and people liked to have us about. Willie, too, was a good conversationalist, and had a ready wit that made him welcome, since an Irishman and wit are

synonymous to the conventional mind. That his witticisms pertained rather to the France of his education than the Ireland of his birth was unrecognised, because unexpected.

I was—rather, I fear, to Willie's annoyance—labelled "delightfully unusual" soon after our going to Bennington, the cause being that I received my guests one evening with my then abundant hair hanging loosely to below my waist, twisted through with a wide blue ribbon. To Willie's scandalised glance I replied with a hasty whisper, "The very latest from Paris," and was rewarded with the mollified though puzzled expression very properly awarded by all men to the "latest fashion" of their womenkind.

I put off the queries of the ladies after dinner in the same way, and was rewarded by them by the general admission that it was a fashion for the few—who had the hair. Never did I admit that I had been out with the horses so late that I had had just time for Caroline to hurry me into a gown and shake down my hair, as my first guest arrived. So little do we deserve the fame forced upon us.

Sometimes Willie was delayed at a race meeting, and did not get home in time for the dinner party he had insisted on my giving, and the awkwardness resulting—greatly exaggerated in the estimation of those conventional folk—caused much irritation between us. It was far easier for these good people to believe that "it was very odd" that Captain O'Shea should not be at home to receive his guests than that he had really missed a train.

My annoyance was even more acute when I had to go without him to a dinner miles away, in the unhappy knowledge that my hostess's gaze would wander beyond me, in greeting, seeking for the man who was not there to complete her table.

Our county member's family were among some of the most agreeable of the people living anywhere near us, and I remember the two very pretty daughters as great friends of mine, as also were Lady Susan Smith and her husband. The former was a very handsome woman, curiously stiff in manner and very warm of heart, to whom, in spite of our utter unlikeness in temperament, I became extremely attached.

I think I must have been rather a clever young woman. Once when Willie had gone away for a few days, leaving orders that his smoking-room was to be repapered, he telegraphed the same evening to say he was returning the next day with several friends for the races near by. The room was, of course, not done, and the men said they could not do it in the time, so I drove over to Hertford, returning in triumph with rolls of paper, which I calmly proceeded to paste and put up myself, much to the disgust of our butler, who told my old nurse I was "bad for trade." I made him hold the steps for me—hence his discontent.

Bennington was eight miles from the nearest town, and when Willie was away and I had no guests he wished me to have our great retriever, Ben, who was a splendid guard, in the house at night. One evening a tramp came to the pony stable when I was there alone with Ben, and directly he spoke to me Ben leapt

straight at his throat, and I had a horrible ten minutes getting him off the man. At last I got the dog under control, and made the man roll into the coachhouse—Ben would not let him rise. After I had praised Ben for his good guard of me and shut him up I had to go and attend to the poor tramp, whose injuries were sufficiently severe, and the whole affair worried me so much that I decided that my King Charles spaniel was quite as much guard as I could bear to have about me. Willie could not see my point, but, as the men's cottages were far from the house, and the butler by no means an adequate protection for anyone, he stipulated that I should at any rate keep his gun loaded in my bedroom at night when he was away. This I did, but the knowledge of having a loaded gun in my room rather got on my nerves, until I hit on the happy expedient of getting out of bed and discharging it (in the air) through my always open window the first time I woke in the night. I am sure this had an excellent effect in keeping off wanderers of evil intent, and I heard, to my joy and Willie's, that a gardener courting one of the maids, found "the Missis a perfect terror with that gun."

Our Gladiator foal, of whom Willie had had such golden hope, became lame, and after a time it was found that she (Harpalyce) had a disease of the joint. She was a great pet of mine, and I was her chief nurse during the long illness she had before we were in mercy obliged to have her shot. She suffered badly, and had to be slung, and I sat up many nights with her trying to soothe the pain and tempt her appetite with little delicacies. She used to look at

me with those large, pathetic eyes, so pitiful in suffering animals (and none more so than in horses), and gently rub her velvet muzzle against my cheek.

We had some splendid horses to keep for other people, and, among others, there was Blue Mantle, belonging to a friend of Willie's—Captain Douglas-Lane—one of the most beautiful horses I have ever seen. He was very bad-tempered, and unless his own groom was there he had to have his feed put in from the loft. This curious savageness of temper was not extended to me, as he would allow me to go into his box at any time, and pat and fondle him as much as I liked.

One evening, when Willie was away, the stud groom rushed to the house to say that one of the horses, a very valuable stallion named Orestes, belonging to Mr. Porter, the trainer, of Alfriston, Sussex, had slipped in his box while being groomed and broken his leg. I sent frantically for several veterinary surgeons, but there was nothing to be done, and I had to give the order to have the horse shot to end his sufferings. I then sat, horribly frightened, awaiting Willie's return, for the stud groom's gloomy reiteration of "It's your responsibility, ma'am; your responsibility," was not reassuring. However, Willie, while much upset at the accident, and the necessity for shooting the horse, quite agreed that I had done the only thing possible in the circumstances, as did the owner—Mr. Porter.

Mr. Porter had two very pretty daughters, whom I had to stay with me at Bennington. They were quiet little ladies, and as far apart from the generally

accepted idea of a trainer's daughters, "fast, horsy, and noisy," as could possibly be. Quiet, well-educated, and charming girls, they were welcome visitors, and very popular.

I used to send in a large consignment of fruit, vegetables, and butter to the Hertford market every week, as we produced so much more of everything of the sort than we could consume. The grapes from our vineries were very fine—and I was much disgusted when the head gardener remarked to me that they had much improved since the foal and horse had been buried near the vines.

Our expenses were so heavy, both in the house and stables, that I was very glad to get the ready money for our market produce from garden and farm every week, and, as time went on, the only veto I put upon the sale of produce was on behalf of my pigeons. I had a cloud of beautiful birds that used to settle on me whenever I appeared, cooing and pulling my hair, and a few of these, special favourites, I allowed in my own sitting-room, where they would sit on my table and cause me much inconvenience while I wrote letters. I think Willie must have given orders that they were not to increase, as, though many families were hatched, they never, so far as I could see, reached maturity.

Willie was never good at dunning friends for money owed, and as we had many brood mares, not our own, left with us for months at a time, the stable expenses, both for forage and wages, became appallingly large. It was always difficult to get the accounts in, and while Willie did not like to worry the owners even for the amount for the bare keep of the animals, he

was himself perpetually worried by forage contractors, the shoeing smith, and the weekly wage bill, besides the innumerable extra expenses pertaining to a large stable.

As I urged against the sale of the mares, which he so often threatened, their happy, peaceful maternity, in the long lush grass and shade of trees by day, their comfortable boxes at night, and their fondness of me, he used to stare gloomily at me and swear gently as he wished there were more profit than peace in their maternity and my sentimentality. But he could forget his worries in the pleasure of schooling the yearlings, and we agreed always to hold on as long as possible to a life we both found so interesting, and with the facile hope of youth we thought to get the better of our expenses in time.

In this year (1869) my eldest (surviving) brother, Frank, became very ill, and Willie and I went to Rivenhall to see him. He wanted me to nurse him, so I stayed on in my old home while Willie returned to Bennington.

Frank had consumption, and very badly; he suffered intensely, and I think I have never longed for the presence of a doctor with more anxiety than I did for Dr. Gimson's at that time. My perpetual fear was that the effect of the opiate he gave to deaden poor Frank's pain would wear off before he came again. When it grew dusk Frank desired me to put candles in every window, that he might not see the shadows—the terrifying shadows which delirium and continual doses of morphia never fail to produce.

Frank's very dear friend, Captain Hawley Smart,

the novelist, came to Rivenhall in the hope that he could cheer poor Frank's last hours; but he was too ill to know or care, and Hawley Smart could, like the rest of us, only await the pitying release of death.

From my position by the side of Frank's bed I could see the bridge over the lake and the white gate leading towards Witham, and I watched with feverish anxiety for the sight of the doctor's cart—longing for his coming to relieve the tortured brain that was so filled with the horror of undefinable terrors; and the pain of my watching was increased by the knowledge that the morphia, even while it allayed the agony he was suffering, always added to the after horror of the awakening.

Dr. Gimson was justly a hero in Essex. At one time, when unable to get anyone to help him, he strove alone to stem an outbreak of diphtheria in an Essex village some miles from his own practice, and acted both as doctor and nurse when the supply of the latter failed. Single-handed, he worked night and day among the poor people: nursing, healing, and cheering, for life or death, until the awful epidemic abated. To this day his memory is there venerated as that of a saint.

After Frank's death I returned to Bennington taking his ex-soldier servant with me. The latter wa a useless encumbrance, as it turned out, but it relieved my mother of his presence at Rivenhall.

We went on at Bennington in very much the sam way until the end of that year. Willie had bee betting very heavily in the hope of relieving the eve increasing difficulty of meeting our heavy expenses

and now, added to his losses in racing and the heavy expenses attendant on keeping up such a large stud, the kind-hearted bank manager insisted that the large overdraft on his bank must be cleared.

Hitherto, whenever he had become very pressing, Willie had sent him "something on account," and we had given a breakfast for his hunt, as Willie said such a good fellow "could not eat and ask at the same time." Now, however, Mr. Cheshire sorrowfully declined to eat, and maintained that his duty to his firm necessitated his insisting upon the clearing of the overdraft. After consultation with him and another friend Willie decided that there was nothing to be done but send all our mares up to Tattersall's for sale. It was a heavy blow to us, but Willie had never had sufficient capital to carry on an undertaking requiring such enormous expenditure, and his experience had been dearly bought.

As the long string of thoroughbred mares was led away to the station and I kissed their muzzles for the last time I cried bitterly. Poor Willie watched them go with a miserable face, which became even more so when a sympathetic old groom explained pitifully: "Ah, dear ma'am, maybe you'll cry more when they all comes back." And come back they did, escorted by Tommie, the pony, for not a bid of any importance was made for any of them. Though I was glad to see my favourites again, it of course meant more trouble in the immediate future, our affairs getting into a worse state every day till bankruptcy became imminent.

My brother-in-law, Sir Thomas Barrett-Lennard

paid Willie £500 for the mares, and Willie sent them to Belhus, where Sir Thomas had them turned into the park.

After this we managed to pay off all the servants, and I arranged to go to Brighton with my old Lucy and our faithful Selby, the stud-groom, who desired to stay on with us until we could arrange our plans, as did also my maid Caroline.

When Willie was made bankrupt Mr. Hobson—a gentleman living near us with his very charming wife, who afterwards became Mrs. A. Yates—very kindly took my little old pony across the fields at night to his own place and kept him there so that he should not go into the sale of our goods. This defrauded no one, as the pony (my own) was beyond work, being my childhood's pet.

CHAPTER X

A DAY ON THE DOWNS

"*A son to clasp my finger tight.*"—NORMAN GALE.

I WAS now nearing my first confinement, and my aunt, Mrs. Benjamin Wood, took a house for me at Brighton close to my sister's, Lady Barrett-Lennard. There my son Gerard was born.

I was very ill for some time after this, and my mother, Lady Wood, stayed with me, employing her time in making a lovely water-colour sketch for me.

Willie's affairs were now settled, and I had to give up all hope of returning to my dearly loved country home and all my pets; but I had the consolation of my beautiful babe, and I forgot my sorrow in my greater possession. He was very healthy, so I had no trouble on that score.

A young solicitor who took Willie's affairs in hand, Mr. Charles Lane (of Lane and Monroe), very kindly took upon himself to call on my Uncle William, who was then Lord Chancellor of England, and ask him to assist us in our financial difficulties. Uncle William was much astonished at the application of this, obviously nervous, young solicitor, who with the courage born of despair went on to suggest that Lord Hatherley might give Willie a lucrative appointment.

Strangely enough it had never occurred to me to apply to Uncle William for anything, and when Mr. Lane called on us and solemnly presented me with a substantial cheque and a kind message from my uncle, Willie and I were as surprised as we were pleased, even though Mr. Lane explained that "the Lord Chancellor had no post suitable" for Willie's energies.

We then moved into a house on the Marine Parade, as the one we were in was very expensive, and though I was glad to be next door to my sister, I felt it was not fair to my aunt, Mrs. Wood, who was paying the rent for us.

As soon as we moved to the new house an old friend, and noted steeplechase rider, came to stay with us for a few days with his wife. He became very ill at dinner, and in a few hours was raving in delirium tremens, while his poor wife hid sobbing in my bedroom, as she was so much afraid of his violence. He was a big man, and our doctor a little one, but after the first encounter, when the doctor was knocked down flat on entering the room, the doctor was absolutely master of the very dangerous situation. I have always had a great admiration for the medical profession.

Someone now gave me a magnificent prize-bred mastiff dog, and this dog developed distemper so badly that I had to nurse him for weeks—with the help of Mr. Mannington, the veterinary surgeon (who was known then as the best patcher-up of broken-down race-horses in existence). Poor Bismarck became paralysed in the hind-quarters, but, with unceasing care, we pulled him through and he grew into such a magnificent specimen that we had many good offers for

him. At last, as we were unable to keep him properly exercised, and Willie was offered a very large sum for him from a Frenchman, we let him go to France.

The Franco-Prussian War having broken out, Brighton was thronged with French people. The women looked very handsome with the massive braids of hair worn by old and young, low on the neck, and tied with ribbon, or hanging in loops wound round with silver cord. This French fashion was, of course, eagerly copied by English ladies, and though I had a wealth of hair I found it was not nearly heavy enough when braided like this, and Willie insisted on my buying additional braids, as indeed was necessary in all cases while this foolish fashion lasted.

My faithful French maid Caroline stuck to us all through our fallen fortunes, as also did our stud-groom, and though we could no longer pay them the high wages they had always had, they refused to leave us.

Caroline, whose hardest task had been to dress my hair and wash my little dog, now with the utmost cheerfulness took to cooking, scrubbing, cleaning, and being literally a maid-of-all-work; while Selby, who had had more than twenty underlings to do his bidding and who had never even cleaned the horse he rode at Bennington, now did anything that needed doing, helping in the house, valeting his master. Finally, when Mr. Hobson sent my old pony down, Selby installed himself as stable-boy as a matter of course, and as though he had always been in the habit of receiving ten shillings a week for doing a great deal, instead of £200 a year for doing practically nothing.

Both Selby and Caroline considered it their first duty

to keep Gerard, my little son, amused, so, in spite of our troubles, Willie and I were very comfortable, thanks to these faithful friends.

My aunt, Mrs. Wood, now took a cottage for me at Patcham, just out of Brighton, and I was able to have my pony there. The house at Patcham was a dear, little, old-fashioned place right against the Downs, and there I used to walk for miles in the early morning, the springy turf almost forcing one foot after the other, while the song of the larks and scent of the close-growing, many-tinted herbage in the clear bright air filled me with joyous exhilaration.

Willie went to town, and often was away for days, on various businesses, and I was very lonely at home—even though I daily drove the old pony in to Brighton that I might see my sister.

I had a cousin of Willie's, Mrs. Vaughan, to stay with me for some time, but she was perpetually wondering what Willie was doing that kept him so much away, and this added irritation to loneliness. I had had such a busy life at Bennington that I suffered much from the want of companionship and the loss of the many interests of my life there. I felt that I must make some friends here, and, attracted by a dark, handsome woman whom I used to meet riding when I walked on to the Downs, I made her acquaintance, and found in her a very congenial companion. Quiet and rather tragic in expression, she thawed to me, and we were becoming warmly attached to one another when Willie, in one of his now flying visits, heard me speak of my new friend. On hearing her name—it was one that a few years before had brought shame and sudden death into one of the

oldest of the " great " families of England—he professed to be absolutely scandalised, and, with an assumption of authority that at once angered me, forbade me to have any more to do with her. He met my protests with a maddening superiority, and would not tell me why she was " beyond the pale." I explained to him my own opinion of many of the women he liked me to know and almost all the men, for I had not then learnt the hard lesson of social life, and that the one commandment still rigorously observed by social hypocrisy was, " Thou shalt not be found out."

When I met Mrs. —— again she soothed my indignation on her behalf, and as we sat there, high on a spur of a hill, watching the distant sea, she smiled a little sadly as she said to me: " Little fool, I have gambled in love and have won, and those who win must pay as well as those who lose. Never gamble, you very young thing, if you can help it; but if you do be sure that the stake is the only thing in the world to you, for only that will make it worth the winning and the paying."

It was nearly ten years afterwards that I, feeling restless and unhappy, had such a sudden longing for the sea, that one morning I left my home (at Eltham) very early and went down to Brighton for the day. I was alone, and wished to be alone; so I got out of the train at Preston, for fear I should meet any of my relations at Brighton station. A fancy then seized me to drive out to Patcham, about a mile farther on, to see if my former little house was occupied. Having decided that it was I dismissed my fly and walked up the bridle path beyond the house out on to the Downs,

where, turning south, towards the sea, I walked steadily over the scented turf, forcing out of my heart all but the joy of movement in the sea wind, with the song of the skylarks in my ears.

The exhilaration of the down-lands filled my whole being as it had always done, but now my spirits rose with a quick sense of happiness that I did not understand. I sang as I walked, looking towards the golden light and sullen blue of the sea, where a storm was beating up with the west wind. Presently I realised that I was very tired, and I sat down to rest upon a little hilltop where I could see over the whole of Brighton. It was now afternoon, and I was tired and hungry. I idly wondered if I should go down presently and claim the hospitality that I knew my sister, Lady Barrett-Lennard, would so gladly offer me. But my gay spirits had suddenly deserted me, and, though the larks were still singing in the sunshine where I sat, the wind seemed colder and the dark line of the stormy sea had grown very wide.

Presently the wind brought up the rain, and I rose and began to descend the hill towards Brighton. I wondered apathetically if my sister was in Brighton or if they were all at Belhus still. Anyhow, I knew there would be someone at her house who would give me something to eat. Then I turned round, and began deliberately to climb up the hill on to the Downs again. After all, I thought, I had come here to be alone, and did not want to see my sister particularly. The family might all be there, and anyhow I did not want to see anybody who loved me and could bias my mind. I had come down to get away from Willie for a little while—

or rather from the thought of him, for it was rarely enough I saw him. If I went down to see Emma and Tom they would ask how Willie was, and really I did not know, and then how were the children. Well, I could thankfully answer that the children were always well. Why should I be supposed to have no other interests than Willie and my children? Willie was not, as a matter of fact, at all interesting to me. As to my children, I loved them very dearly, but they were not old enough, or young enough, to engross my whole mind. Then there was dear old Aunt Ben, who was so old that she would not tolerate any topic of conversation of more recent date than the marriage of Queen Victoria. What a curiously narrow life mine was, I thought, narrow, narrow, narrow, and so deadly dull. It was better even to be up there on the Downs in the drifting rain—though I was soaked to the skin and so desperately tired and hungry. I paused for shelter behind a shepherd's hut as I saw the lithe spare form of my brother-in-law, Sir Thomas, dash past, head down and eyes half closed against the rain. He did not see me, and I watched him running like a boy through the driving mist till he disappeared. He had come over from Lewes, I supposed. He was a J.P., and had perhaps been over to the court; he never rode where he could walk—or rather run.

I waited, sheltering now from the rain, and through the mist there presently came a girl riding. On seeing me she pulled up to ask the quickest way to Brighton, as the mist had confused her. As I answered her I was struck by a certain resemblance, in the dark eyes and proud tilt of the chin, to my friend of many years ago,

whose battles I had fought with Willie, and who had told me something of her life while we sat very near this place. The girl now before me was young, and life had not yet written any bitterness upon her face; but as she thanked me, and, riding away, laughingly urged me to give up the attempt to "keep dry," and to fly home before I dissolved altogether, I had the voice of my old-time friend in my ears, and I answered aloud, "I am afraid; I tell you, I am afraid." But she was dead, I knew, and could not answer me, and I smiled angrily at my folly as I turned down the track to Preston, while I thought more quietly how the daughter whose loss had caused such bitter pain to my dear friend, when she had left all for love, had grown to happy womanhood in spite of all.

I was now feeling very faint from my long day of hard exercise without food, but there was a train about to start for London, and I would not miss it.

On the platform for Eltham, at Charing Cross, stood Mr. Parnell, waiting, watching the people as they passed the barriers. As our eyes met he turned and walked by my side. He did not speak, and I was too tired to do so, or to wonder at his being there. He helped me into the train and sat down opposite me, and I was too exhausted to care that he saw me wet and dishevelled. There were others in the carriage. I leant back and closed my eyes, and could have slept but that the little flames deep down in Parnell's eyes kept flickering before mine, though they were closed. I was very cold; and I felt that he took off his coat and tucked it round me, but I would not open my eyes to look at him. He crossed over to the seat next

to mine, and, leaning over me to fold the coat more closely round my knees, he whispered, "I love you, I love you. Oh, my dear, how I love you." And I slipped my hand into his, and knew I was not afraid.

CHAPTER XI

BEAUFORT GARDENS

> "*Nor to thyself the task shall be*
> *Without reward; for thou shalt learn*
> *The wisdom early to discern*
> *True beauty in utility.*"

WILLIE was away more than ever after this, and I became so bored and lonely that I told him that I must join him in London if he meant to be there so much. He then proposed to give up the Patcham house and move the small household to Harrow Road, London, temporarily, till we had time to find something less depressing.

In going we also hoped to shake off an acquaintance who haunted us at Brighton and Patcham, a Mr. D., but he soon found us out, and, realising that I was determined to be "not at home" to him, he took to leaving gifts of beautiful Spanish lace at the door, directed to me, and only the words "from Romeo" inside.

This man had lived most of his life in Spain, and was a remarkably good judge of Spanish lace, and I must confess I was tempted to keep the rich creamy-white stuff that arrived anonymously. This "Romeo" was more than middle-aged, and, when he wrote that for "safety's sake" he would address messages to me

through the "agony" column of the newspapers, Willie's wrath was unbounded.

He wrote to poor "Romeo" in sarcastic vein, alluding to his age and figure, his insolence in addressing "a young and beautiful" woman with his "pestilent" twaddle. He told him, too, that he withdrew from all business transactions with him, and would have much pleasure in kicking "Romeo" if he dared call at the house again. I was almost sorry for the foolish old man; but that was wasted on him, for he continued, undeterred by Willie's anger, to address "Juliet" in prose and verse in the daily papers. As he said, the "Daily Press was open to all, and the Captain could not stop that!" I used to laugh helplessly as Willie opened the morning paper at breakfast, and, first gravely turning to the "agony" column, would read the latest message to "Juliet" from her devoted "Romeo," becoming so angry that breakfast was spoiled to him. The sudden cessation of our acquaintance prevented our making that of Mme. Adelina Patti as "Romeo" had arranged a dinner in order that I should meet her.

A few weeks after we arrived in Harrow Road Willie began to complain of feeling ill, and a swelling that had formed on his neck became very painful. He was confined to bed, and after great suffering for weeks, Mr. Edgar Barker, who was constantly in attendance, said he must operate to save Willie's life. I had no nurse, as at this time we were in such financial straits that I really did not know which way to turn, and Willie was too ill to be asked about anything. Mr. Barker said to me, "You must hold his

head perfectly still, and not faint." So he operated, and all went well, in spite of my inexperience in surgical nursing. Mr. Barker, for whose kindness at this time I can never be sufficiently grateful, helped me in every way, and would not allow even Willie's mother and sister to do so, as their presence irritated the patient so intensely.

During this time of trouble a Mr. Calasher, a money-lender, called to have some acceptances of Willie's met. I left Willie's bedside for a few minutes to see him, and he was kindness itself, agreeing to a renewal on my signature alone, and most kindly sending in some little delicacies that he thought Willie might fancy. When Willie had recovered and went to see Mr. Calasher about the bills, it being then more than ever impossible to meet them, he (Mr. Calasher) would not consent to a further renewal, but tore the bills across and gave them back to Willie, saying, "Don't worry yourself, Captain O'Shea, but pay me when you can, and add six per cent. interest if you are able." I am glad to say we did this within the year. His courtesy about these bills was a great relief to me, as Willie was far too ill to be spoken to about business, and I was at my wits' end for money to meet every-day expenses. The accommodating Jew who lends the indiscreet Christian his money—naturally with a business-like determination to increase it—has so much said against him that I am glad to be able to speak my little word of gratitude of one who was considerate and chivalrous to Willie as well as myself, to his own detriment.

As Willie got better, my uncle—Lord Hatherley—

and my aunt sent us various good things to make Willie strong, and my days of nursing were lightened, since he was now able to amuse himself with our little boy. This young man, when only just able to toddle, took the opportunity presented by my being in close attendance on his father to lock me in the conservatory, and, thus freed from supervision, to take his headlong way down the steep stairs. I had to thrust my hand through the glass panel of the door to unlock it, and catch my baby just in time to prevent the dive he had set his heart on—into the hall two floors below. His temper was distinctly gusty in those days, and once, during a walk with myself and my old Lucy, my small son flung himself down in the midst of the traffic in the Bayswater Road with tight-shut eyes and crimson face, working up the howl of rage that never struck terror to our hearts under ordinary conditions. I summoned up sufficient presence of mind, however, to whisk him up from under the very feet of a cab-horse.

The quickly-gathered crowd was very indignant with me, and said it was "a shame, poor little darling," but, since I was always addicted to such unreasonableness myself on seeing children and animals coerced into safety, I was not so indignant as was my old nurse.

Mr. "Romeo," still faithful, in spite of all rebuffs, sent me long letters of congratulation at Willie's recovery. One in particular I remember caused an indignant snort and sardonic chuckle from Willie when I gave it to him to amuse him. It said that in Willie's place he would have "lain to kiss my feet for the rest of his life" had he been nursed as I had nursed Willie! Willie said he was glad that Romeo of

the ample girth had not suffered this discomfort of gratitude.

Better circumstances arising on Willie's recovery of health, we were anxious to get away from the depressions of Harrow Road, with its constant processions of hearses and mourners on the way to Kensal Green Cemetery.

After a weary hunt we finally decided upon a house in Beaufort Gardens. Willie insisted upon the extravagance of having a paper of silver and blue specially made in Paris for the drawing-room. This very beautiful paper showed up the extreme ugliness of our furniture to great disadvantage. However, it was all very comfortable, and the change from Harrow Road agreeable.

My French maid rejoiced in returning to her light duties as lady's maid, and reigned over a staff of maids in unison with the butler.

Selby, at last convinced that race-horses were out of the question with us, left us, with mutual expressions of esteem, to seek more congenial surroundings.

We went to Beaufort Gardens in 1872, and Willie insisted upon my making many new acquaintances. We soon found ourselves in a social swirl of visits, visitors and entertainments. I had always disliked society, as such, and this appeared to me to be almost as bad as the Bennington dinner-party days, without the compensating circumstances. Willie, however, thoroughly enjoyed this life, and as he was always worrying me to dress in the latest fashion, and would have a Frenchman in to dress my hair before every party, I became very rebellious.



MRS. PARNELL IN 1873

From a water-colour drawing

Here my eldest daughter was born, and I was glad of the rest from parties and balls—even though so many people I did not care to see came "to cheer me up!"

As soon as I was about again the life I found so wearisome recommenced. After escorting me home from a dance or reception that I had not wanted to go to, Willie would go off again to "finish up the night," and one night, when in terror I was seeking for burglars, I found a policeman sitting on the stairs. He explained genially that the door was open, and he thought it better to come inside and guard the door for the Captain's return!

Of the many small items of Willie's wishes that I loathed was having my hair dressed in the prevailing French style. One evening, when we were going to some stupid function, Cunninghame Graham came in, looked at my hair, and cried aghast, "Do take it down, Youngest. You look awful!" As my own conviction was similar I lost no time in doing so, and afterwards used Cunninghame's opinion in defence of my own personality.

We gave dinner-parties to various people of note at that time, especially to the great world of Paris in London, or visiting London; for Willie's family had greatly intermarried in France, and his mother and sister lived chiefly in Paris, while Willie was very popular at the French and Spanish Embassies. I remember on one dreary occasion the butler informed me confidentially that the cook was so desperately drunk that he "had a misgiving" as to the "success" of dinner. An agitated descent to the kitchen proved

to me that the cook, already asleep under the table, affectionately embracing a bottle, was beyond any misgiving; and I sternly ordered her unsympathetic fellow-labourers to remove her, while I cooked the dinner myself. As regards the dinner this solution of the difficulty was absolutely successful, but a good cook makes a heated and absent-minded hostess.

Alfred Austin—not then Poet Laureate—was a great friend and constant visitor of ours at that time. He had been at school—at Oscott—with Willie, and he was, I remember, extremely sensitive to criticism.

"Owen Meredith," Lord Lytton, was also a frequent visitor, especially when my sister Anna was with us—she being sympathetic to his genius.

I was always glad to see Willie's Spanish relations who came over to England, especially Guielmo, the eldest son of Willie's uncle, John O'Shea. Guielmo was devoted to my children, and his coming was the signal for wild games with "Cousin Giraffe," as they called him. Guielmo had a most charming little romance which he confided to me. He had, when very young, fallen in love with a beautiful young Spanish girl, the sister of a friend of his. She was absolutely blind, and his parents and friends urged him to look elsewhere for a wife. But his was a faithful soul, and after some years of determined waiting the elders gave way, and a very happy and successful marriage was the result.

CHAPTER XII

MORE FINANCIAL DIFFICULTIES

"*Thus while Thy several mercies plot*
And work on me, now cold, now hot,
The work goes on and slacketh not."—VAUGHAN.

I THINK Willie and I were beginning to jar upon one another a good deal now, and I loved to get away for long walks by myself through the parks of London. Kensington Gardens was a great solace to me in all seasons and weathers, and I spent much of my time there. I often turned into the Brompton Oratory on my way home for a few minutes' peace and rest of body and soul, and these quiet times were a comfort to me when suffering from the fret and worry of my domestic life. The kneeling figures waiting for Benediction, the prevailing sense of harmony which seems to embrace one in the Catholic churches, soothed and rested me. The great comfort I have always found in the Catholic churches, both at home and abroad, is that one is allowed to rest in peace, to acquire knowledge if one will, but unforced, unretarded by spiritual busy-bodies, who are so anxious to help the Almighty that they hinder Him with their fussy, impertinent attentions to the souls to whom He is perhaps trying to speak.

I first made my way to the Oratory when my

daughter Norah was baptised, and some little time afterwards one of the Fathers called on me. Finally Father —— undertook to call regularly to instruct me in the Catholic religion. He and the other priests lent me any books I wanted, and "The Threshold of the Catholic Faith," and one other I have now. That I never got beyond the "Threshold" was no fault of these good Fathers, who taught me with endless patience and uncompromising directness. But I had before me two types of Catholic in Willie and his mother and sister, and both were to me stumbling-blocks. The former was, as I knew, what they call a "careless Catholic," and I thought that if he who had been born in that faith that means so much, made so little of it, perhaps it was more of a beautiful dream than a reality of life. Yet when I turned and considered those "good Catholics," his mother and sister, I found such a fierce bigotry and deadly dullness of outlook, such an immense piety and so small a charity, that my whole being revolted against such a belittling of God-given life. Now, I know that Mary and the Comtesse disliked me personally, and also that my temperament was antagonistic to theirs, as indeed to Willie's, though the affection he and I had for one another eased the friction between us; but youth judges so much by results, and my excursion into the Catholic religion ended in abrupt revolt against all forms and creeds. This feeling was intensified when my second little girl, Carmen, was born and christened at the Oratory. I would not go in, but stood waiting in the porch, where I had so often marked tired men and women passing in to pray after their hard and joyless day of toil, and

I felt that my children were taken from me, and that I was very lonely.

My Uncle William, Lord Hatherley, was Lord High Chancellor at this time, and we were a good deal at his house, both at "functions" and privately. His great friend, Dean Stanley, was very kind to me; Dean Hook came, too, and many other Churchmen were continually in and out in their train. My cousin, William Stephens, who afterwards became Dean of Winchester, was then a very good-looking and agreeable young man; he followed my uncle about like a shadow, and my uncle and Aunt Charlotte were devoted to him. But my uncle gathered other society than that of Churchmen about him, and it amused me to watch for the pick of the intellectual world of the day as they swarmed up and down the stairs at the receptions, with the necessary make-weight of people who follow and pose in the wake of the great.

Willie insisted upon *his* wife being perfectly gowned on these occasions, and as he so often got out of going to those functions and insisted on my going alone, certain other relations of Lord Hatherley's would hover round me with their spiteful remarks of: "Dear Katie, alone again! poor dear girl, where *does* he go? How odd that you are so often alone—how little you know!" I was fond of my old uncle and he of me, but these little amenities did not make me like these social functions better, especially as his wife, my Aunt Charlotte, had a most irritating habit of shutting her eyes when greeting me, and, with her head slightly to one side, saying, "Poor dear! Poor lovely lamb!"

Uncle William's failing eyesight finally led to his resignation, and, though he felt that he needed his well-earned rest, it was a hard trial to him to resign the Chancellorship, to which he had worked his way, absolutely without aid or influence, from the lowest rung of the ladder of law. But in his days of rest he had the comfort of knowing that what he had worked for he had attained, and, as was said of him by one who knew him so well—Dean Stanley—he had kept his "heart and fingers clean."

My Uncle William and his wife always deplored that they were childless, and it was in an access of bitterness that he once exclaimed: "God withholds sons, but the devil sends nephews!" in allusion to one who had given him considerable trouble.

My Aunt Charlotte led a very busy, fussy life, and, when pressed for time, often sent her carriage for me, so that I should leave cards, and, where necessary, write her name in the visitors' book of the great or Royal houses where she and my uncle went as guests. They were the most devoted married people I have ever seen, and, if there be such a state in married life, theirs was a perfect union.

My sister, Lady Barrett-Lennard, had a house in Whitehall Gardens for that season in order to "bring out" her eldest daughter, and, as my other sister, Mrs. Steele, came up to town occasionally, I saw a good deal of them, and was happier and more amused than I had been for some time. I had become fond of London, all my children were strong and healthy there, and I was very proud of the gold, curly heads

and fair skins as they went off to the park in the morning. I once accompanied a lady who was staying with us to her French dressmaker, Madame ——, who tried hard to persuade me to order some gowns, but who was delighted and did not worry me further, when I said, " My children are my clothes ! " She considered the sentiment so pretty !

My only son, Gerard, was now a beautiful golden-haired boy of four years, with a dazzlingly fair skin and dancing eyes of Irish blue. We wished to have his portrait painted by a lady who exhibited at the Royal Academy, but he was as naughty as he was beautiful, and neither bribes nor threats could keep him still for a moment. We were in despair until I remembered his ambition to be left alone on the top of the housemaid's steps. There he was allowed to perch till a not very successful portrait was completed, and he brought the sittings to a close with the confidently expected dive, head-first to the floor, causing the uncanny silence characteristic of this boy when hurt, a silence that always seemed to stop my heart while it rejoiced his father's. The little boy would howl the house down in the ungovernable rages he at times indulged in, but when hurt he would shut his mouth tightly, and no anxious inquiries could get more than a stifled " I'm thinkin' " out of him.

This winter, following the birth of my second girl, was bitterly cold, and my health, which had not been good for some time before her birth, caused much anxiety. After a consultation between Sir William Gull, Sir William Jenner, and my usual doctor, it was decided that we should go to Niton, Isle of Wight, as

I was too weak to travel far. My dear old aunt, Mrs. Benjamin Wood, sent her own doctor to me, and he recommended me to inject opium—an expression of opinion that horrified Sir William Jenner into saying, "That man's mad, or wants to get rid of you!"

I had heard from Willie's Spanish cousins that smallpox was raging in Madrid, and the doctors could not get enough vaccine to vaccinate their patients. This was in the summer, and I bought as many tubes as I could get, and sent them to Madrid. My apparently charitable act had made my own doctor so angry that he would not come near me this winter till he heard that I was really very ill. It appeared that I had upset some extraordinary red-tape etiquette of the medical profession. I showed him the letters of heartfelt gratitude that I had received from the Spanish doctors, and they mollified him somewhat—even though he could not read them!

Our pecuniary affairs were again causing us considerable anxiety, but my dear aunt played the fairy godmother once more, and sent Willie a cheque so that we could go to Niton without worry or anxiety, and stop there until my health should be re-established. So we said good-bye to our friends, and, among others, to the good priests of the Oratory, who begged me to pray for the faith to see what they had failed to convince me of.

We were delighted with the summer warmth of the sun at Niton, and spent a happy Christmas basking in it. Since the hotel was very expensive, Willie established me in lodgings with the children and nurses

in Ventnor, and, finding the place decidedly dull, returned to London.

The children and I wandered about out of doors all day, but I was kept awake night after night by the foghorns and sometimes by signals of distress from Blackgang Chine. The proprietress of the house used to come to me at night and tell me how her husband had been called out to help in the lifeboat. Two terrible wrecks occurred there. We watched until morning for the boat while the storm was beating against the house and the waves were raging against the rocks and making sport of the human lives they were battering to death.

The local doctor at Ventnor, who had been put in charge of my shattered health, was not satisfied that it was in any way improving, and, finding one day that I was in the habit of taking sleeping draughts, he snorted angrily off to the chemist and returned with a large tin of meat extract, with which he presented me, adding the intimation that it was worth a dozen bottles of my draught—which happened to be a powder—and that my London doctors were bereft of intelligence. I was too tired to argue the point and contented myself with the observation that all doctors save the one in attendance were fellows in unintelligence—a sentiment he considered suspiciously for some moments before snorting away like the amiable little steam engine he was. His specific for sleeplessness was much more wholesome than drugs, and I have always found it so since then.

CHAPTER XIII

CAPTAIN O'SHEA ENTERS POLITICAL LIFE

" *D'un cœur qui t'aime,*
Mon Dieu, qui peut troubler la tranquille paix,
Il cherche, en tout, ta volonté suprème.
Et ne se cherche jamais,
Sur la terre, dans le ciel même,
Est il, d'autre bonheur que la tranquille paix
D'un cœur qui t'aime."—RACINE.

'ILLIE was too busy to come down to Ventnor gain, and I became so depressed by the relaxing r and by the sight of the many poor, consumptive eople I met at every turn, veritable signposts in ieir different stages of disease, of the road I had een warned that I was on, that I decided to go earer home. My doctor suggested Hastings, and iere I went, taking my small family under the indly escort of one of my nephews. When this oung man had settled me with the children and iaids at St. Leonards, with most careful considera-on for our comfort, he informed his Uncle Willie f the whereabouts of his family.

Willie soon came down, and, as my health improved ipidly, we stayed on for some time, making frequent isits to my Aunt " Ben " at Eltham, who was making ur stay at the seaside possible. This was practically iy first introduction to my aunt, as my former visits 'ere when, as a little child, I was only allowed to sit

by her side in the "tapestry room" trying to do some needlework under her supervision, and assisting her in the consumption of the luscious peaches she always had on the table. In those days I would have been wild with terror at the idea of being left alone with this aunt, who always wore the fashions of her early Victorian youth, and who would not tolerate the slightest noise in the house. I now found her of fascinating interest, and even the painful sense of "hush" in her house, the noiseless stepping of the servants and the careful seclusion of sunlight had attractions for me. My uncle, Benjamin Wood, had died very many years before, and my aunt never alluded to him. She herself had never left Eltham since his death, and had only once been in a railway train, living in complete seclusion in her fine old Georgian house, only "taking the air" in the grounds adjoining or emerging forth in her chariot to drive for an hour daily.

Her curious old-world mode of speech and what she termed "deportment," together with her outlook on life across half a century ignored, lent a piquancy to her conversation that was delightful. She lived in the intellectual world of the Greek poets, and of Addison, Swift and Racine; and there was a leisure and a scholarly atmosphere about her life that seemed to banish the hurry and turmoil of the modern world at her gate. She was extremely generous in subscribing to what she termed "Organisations for the better conduct of charitable relief," and, though of no particular religious belief, she subscribed to the various objects of local charity when asked to do so by the clergyman

of the parish. The latter gentleman once made the mistake of offering to read the Scriptures to her on the occasion of an illness, and I well remember his face of consternation when she replied: "I thank you, Mr. ——, but I am still well able to read, and the Scriptures do not interest me." Yet during the many years I spent in constant companionship with her the quiet peace which reigned by her side gave me the most restful and soothing hours of my life.

On these visits of ours, from St. Leonards, Willie and I only went for the day, since my old aunt objected to "gentlemen visitors" staying in the house, declaring that it "perturbed" the routine of her "domestic staff." After we had paid her several visits in this way she informed me that she had ascertained that I was much alone, that she was very tenderly attached to me, and would wish to provide for me and my children if I would come to live near her so that I could be her constant companion. She added that she considered that this arrangement would be more "seemly" for me, as Willie was obliged to be away from home so much.

After consultation with the (county court) judge, Gordon Whitbread, her nephew and my cousin, who always transacted her business for her, she bought a house for me at the other side of her park, and arranged to settle a regular income on me and to educate my children. In return she asked that her "Swan"—as she always called me—should be her daily companion. This I was until her death, at the age of ninety-four, about fifteen years later.

My aunt lived a life of great seclusion, and, with

the exception of George Meredith (the author), and the Rev. —— Wilkinson, who each came down once a week to read to her, her oculist and great friend, Dr. Bader, and two old ladies, friends of her youth, she rarely saw anyone.

My aunt was very fond of me, and I was with her nearly the whole of the day—reading to her, writing for her, wheeling her up and down the great tapestry room, or walking quietly in the grounds. Chislehurst is near Eltham, and on the drives we took in the great old-fashioned "chariot" (which had the motion of a ship nearing the shore) we sometimes met a beautiful woman driving herself, with one servant behind her. I remember on one occasion my aunt, who was very short-sighted, observed that her servants touched their hats as this lady went by. She said nothing at the time, but when we returned home, and she stood on the steps of the house leaning on my arm, she turned and said to her coachman: "Frost, I observed that you and Henry saluted a lady during our airing."

"Yes, ma'am, the Empress Eugénie, ma'am."

"Never do that again, Frost. I forbid my servants to salute that lady."

As I helped her up the steps she murmured indignantly to herself—for she was of the old régime and an ardent Legitimist.

I was generally with my aunt from the first thing in the morning, returning to my children at lunch-time, and in the afternoon I got home for dinner, should Willie happen to return. These quiet years with my aunt were a liberal education to me, as she

was a good Latin and French scholar, and so proficient in Greek that up to the last week of her life she translated Greek verse. She used to explain to me, when I asked why she was so particular in sending her servants to church, that, although she professed no belief herself, she had observed it was "beneficial to others," and that her father—Admiral Samson Michell, of the Portuguese Navy—had very carefully instructed his daughters—my mother and aunts—"in the Christian religion; to his great solace."

To the maids she particularly commended religious observance as being productive of "propriety of conduct." She always encouraged any religious feeling she observed in me, and made me read Nelson's "Festivals and Fasts" and Jeremy Taylor to her on Sundays; unless Willie came down from London and read French to her. Willie was an excellent linguist, and his French had the perfect accent she delighted in.

Sunday evenings used to be rather a trial to me, as my aunt would order all her servants up to her sitting-room, so that they should repeat the verses she had given them to learn by heart, or the collects for the day, so that she might know that they had used their leisure hours during the week in a "rational" manner. The servants hated these excursions into culture, and, from the man-servant, whose "piece" always lacked aspirates, to the kitchenmaid, round, crimson, and uncomfortable, whose "portion" always halted despairingly in the middle, they kept their resentful gaze fixed upon me, who held the book—and the thankless office of prompter.

My aunt's house—"The Lodge," Eltham—was fine old Georgian, spoilt inside by the erection of mock pillars in the hall. Years before I joined my aunt at Eltham, my mother, being of a curious disposition, took off some of the blue paper on a wall that appeared to move when the wind was strong. She thus discovered that the walls were hung with beautiful old tapestry depicting scriptural and mythological scenes.

My aunt had all the papers removed by experts, and the result disclosed a most wonderful collection of tapestry. It was Crown property, and she was rewarded for the expense of restoring the beauty of the house by an application from the authorities to have it—the tapestry—delivered over to them. As it was found that to move it would be to ruin it, she was allowed to retain it in her possession, and I believe it still hangs in the house, which has now been turned into the Eltham Golf Club.

I have heard that the late King Edward went over the house some years after my aunt's death and had one of the beautiful chimney-pieces removed to one of his own houses. I have a very fond memory of the old red house shadowed by great beech trees, and of the very old elm trees in the "little park," where a sudden crash in heavy summer weather would warn us that another of these dangerous old giants had fallen under the weight of years and foliage.

My aunt was very particular that no one should tread upon the highly polished floors of her house, and, as the two large halls had only rugs laid about

on the shining surface, one had either to make many "tacks" to reach the desired door or seat, or take a short cut on tiptoe and risk her "displeasure."

It was amusing to watch George Meredith on his excursion from the front door to the dressing-room at the foot of the stairs, where my aunt kept three pairs of slippers for the use of her "gentlemen readers" lest their boots should soil the carpets. To reach this little room he had—if in a good mood and conforming to his old friend's regulations—to walk straight ahead past the room, and make a detour round a pillar of (imitation) green marble and a table, back to the door. On days of rebellion against these forms and ceremonies he would hesitate for a moment just inside the door, and, with a reckless uplifting of his head, begin a hasty stride across the sacred places; a stride which became an agitated tip-toeing under the scandalised gaze of the footman. Before he began to read to my aunt the following dialogue invariably took place:—

"Now, my dear lady, I will read you something of my own."

"Indeed, my dear Mr. Meredith, I cannot comprehend your works."

"I will explain my meaning, dear Mrs. Wood."

"You are prodigiously kind, dear Mr. Meredith, but I should prefer Molière to-day."

While Willie and I were still living in London we went down one day to see a furnished house we wished to rent for a few weeks, and, remembering my Aunt Ben's injunction to convey her "felicitations to her dear Mr. Meredith," we called on him.

I had not before met George Meredith, and had only read one of his works—and that "behind the door" when I was very young, owing to some belated scruple of my elders. I remember, as we neared the house, asking Willie the names of Meredith's other works, so that I might be ready primed with intelligent interest, and Willie's sarcastic little smile, as he mentioned one or two, adding, "You need not worry yourself; Meredith will soon enlighten us as to his books. They say it's the one thing he ever talks about." But we spent a delightful afternoon with Mr. Meredith, who showed us all his literary treasures and the little house at the end of the garden where he wrote. While we sat in the lovely little garden drinking tea our host descanted on the exquisite haze of heat that threw soft shadows about the house and gave the great trees in the background the appearance of an enchanted forest. George Meredith was "reader" to Chapman and Hall in those days, and he spoke to me appreciatively of the work of my mother and sister, who published with Chapman and Hall.

In these days at Eltham I learnt to know George Meredith very well, as I saw him almost every week when he came down to read to my aunt. The old lady did not like triangular conversation, so as soon as they were fairly launched in reading or conversation, I would gladly slip away to my own occupations. To Aunt Ben, Meredith appeared to be a very young man indeed, and in her gentle, high-bred way she loved to tease him about his very great appreciation of his own work—and person. Meredith

took her gentle raillery absolutely in good part and would hold forth upon what the literary world "of all time" owed him in his books, and also upon what Lady This-or-that had said in admiration of his good looks at such-and-such a gathering. My aunt used to delight in these tales, which were delivered in the mock serious manner of a boy telling his mother of his prowess, real or imagined; and after a time of listening to him, with only her gently modulated little bursts of laughter to encourage him, she would say, "Oh, my dear Mr. Meredith, your conceit is as wonderful as your genius!"—bringing forth from him the protest, "My dear lady, no! But it is a pleasure to you to hear of my successes and to me to tell you of them." And so I would leave them to their playful badinage and reading.

Meredith was very fond of his old friend, and always treated her with the chivalrous and rather elaborate courtesy that he well knew she delighted in. His weekly visits were a great pleasure to her, and although she would not allow him to read anything modern and never anything of his own work, I think he must have enjoyed his reading and talk with this clever old lady, for often the stipulated two hours of the "classics and their discussion" lengthened into the three or four that caused him to miss all the most convenient trains home.

One evening as I was going into the house I saw him standing on the terrace gazing after the retreating form of my little girl Carmen, then about six years old. As I came up he pointed at the stiff little back and said, "She was flying along like a

fairy Atalanta when I caught her, and said, 'What is your name?' 'Miss Nothin'-at-all!' she replied, with such fierce dignity that I dropped her in alarm."

I called the child to come back and speak politely to Mr. Meredith, but, to his amusement, was only rewarded by an airy wave of the hand as she fled down a by-path.

As I sometimes chatted to Mr. Meredith on his way through the grounds to the station, he would tell me of "that blessèd woman," as he used to call his (second) wife, already then dead, and of how he missed her kind and always sympathetic presence on his return home and in his work. Sometimes the handsome head would droop, and I thought he looked careworn and sad as he spoke of her, and in doing so he lost for the moment all the mannerisms and "effectiveness" which were sometimes rather wearisome in him. As my aunt grew very old she—in the last few years of her life—became unequal to listening and talking to her "gentlemen readers," and to me she deputed the task of telling them so. In the case of George Meredith it was rather painful to me, as I feared the loss of the £300 a year my aunt had so long paid him for his weekly visits might be a serious one to him. But he, too, had aged in all these years, and perhaps his visits to his old friend were becoming rather irksome to him in their regularity. Curiously enough, I shared my aunt's inability to enjoy his work, and to the last I met his mocking inquiry as to my "progress in literature" (i.e. his novels) by a deprecating "Only 'Richard Feverel.'"

The house my aunt bought for me was just across her park, and she had a gate made in the park fence so that I might go backwards and forwards to her house more quickly. My house was a comfortable villa with the usual little " front garden " and larger one in the rear. There were excellent stables at the end of this garden. The house, " Wonersh Lodge," had the usual dining-room and drawing-room, with two other sitting-rooms opening severally into the garden and a large conservatory, which I afterwards made over to Mr. Parnell for his own use. My aunt furnished the house, and we were most comfortable, while my children rejoiced in having the run of the park and grounds after the restraint of town life.

Willie was very much in London now, and occupied himself in getting up a company to develop some mining business in Spain. He always drew up a prospectus excellently; on reading it one could hardly help believing—as he invariably did—that here at last was the golden opportunity of speculators, and some influential men became keenly interested in these mining schemes of his.

A couple of years after having settled at Eltham my eldest little girl became dangerously ill with scarlet fever and diphtheria, owing to defective drainage. I sent my boy and my other little girl to Paris, to their O'Shea grandmother and aunt, to keep them from infection, and nursed my daughter myself until I got diphtheria also, and then we lay in bed together, isolated, in charge of a nurse and faithful maid. My little girl used to whisper huskily that it was " lovely to be ill-in-a-bed wif mummy if only our necks didn't

hurt so drefful much." We were both very ill, and I think that it was only the skilled and constant attention of Dr. Barker that pulled us through. My old aunt was very disconsolate at my long absence from her, and was so shocked that the drains should have proved dangerous in the house she had bought for me that she had them entirely relaid by a London expert.

When my daughter developed scarlet fever I asked Willie to stay in London altogether until the infectious stages were past. This he did, but was at once laid up with measles on his own account. He was peculiarly subject to this complaint, and, while I knew him, he caught the disease no fewer than four times.

When my little girl had recovered sufficiently to travel I took her down to Folkestone for change of air.

Our old friend, Mr. Hobson, brought down a beautiful collie dog, who became the fast friend and constant delight of my children until she died of old age years afterwards, when she was laid in the honourable grave which the three moist-eyed young mourners procured by the removal of my best rose trees in the middle of the lawn.

At Folkestone I met my boy and girl returning from their grandmother in Paris. The two children had been away from me for some months, and I hastened on to the steamer to greet them. I laughed as I caught sight of the very formal little Frenchman into which they had turned my sturdy young son and, ignoring his polite lifting of his hat in greeting, had in

two minutes rumpled him into the noisy, rough little sinner whom I loved. My little Carmen was more difficult. She looked like a little fairy in her French frills and laces, and bitter weeping was the result of my trying to take her from her nurse. This exquisite little mortal did not thaw to me for some days, but with the help of Elfie, the collie, I gradually won her affections from the Paris of her baby-heart.

I was very glad to get back to my aunt again—someone who wanted me always. The children were necessarily much with their nurses and governess, and Willie's Spanish business had now grown into a company, some acute business friends of his thinking so highly of it that they put into it sums varying from £1,000 to £10,000. Our old friend Christopher Weguelin took great interest in it, and eventually Willie was offered the post of manager, at La Mines, at a good salary. It was a very acceptable post to Willie, as he loved the life in foreign countries. There was a very good house, and he had it planted round with eucalyptus trees to keep off the fever so prevalent there, and from which the men working the mines suffered greatly.

Willie was, however, immune to fever, and never had it. He was away in Spain for over eighteen months this time, and did not come home at all during the period.

I had to pay frequent visits to London when samples of the sulphur were sent home for testing purposes, to see Mr. Weguelin, and to place the constant demands for new machinery in as ingratiating a way as possible before various members of the

"board." It seemed impossible to get the English firms to do their business thoroughly, and no sooner had Willie reported the arrival of the new machinery than he cabled that parts were missing. All these unbusinesslike methods caused him acute irritation, as he had the miners there on his hands, idle, perpetually awaiting something from England; and, to relieve his feelings, he would write his reports in hot language to me that I might show them in the proper quarter, an irregularity which did not please the directors.

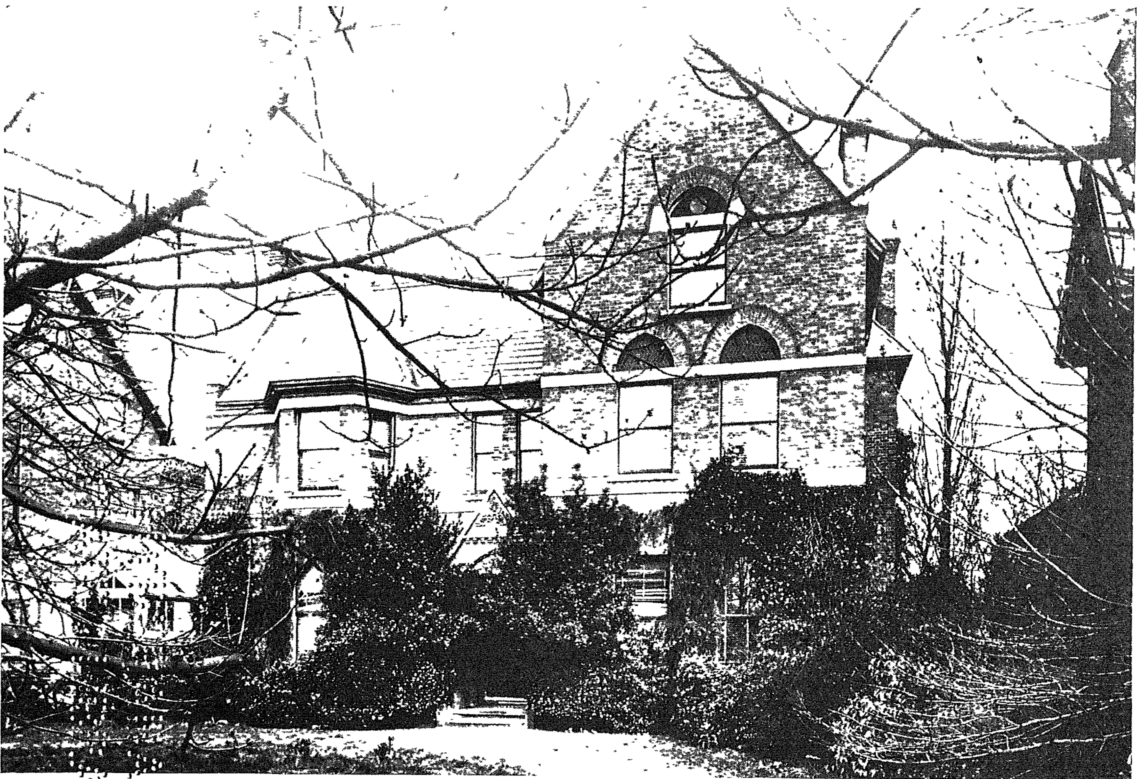
A machine for crushing the ore was sent out, but, though a success, the colour of the sulphur was not right. Then Willie invented and patented a very good machine for extracting the sulphur from the ore, and I drew up a report from his instructions on this, and had it verified by the engineers to the company. But it was too late, and, though I was invited to the dinner, given by members of the board, at the house of the analyst who was to make the last test of the sulphur, the report was not satisfactory in view of the enormous amount of money already expended. Mr. C. took me to the dinner, and afterwards I went with my host to the testing-room, where the report he made of the sulphur he tested was very good.

I remember the uncomfortable sensation I experienced, all during this experiment, from the rich beautiful voice of one of the guests of the evening, who was singing in the adjoining room. My companion was far too much absorbed in his work to notice it, but there was a mad, exultant ring in the voice that blended uncannily with the wild song, and

the blue flame, and the most foul smell made by my host with his test-tubes. On our return to my fellow-guests I noticed that the other men looked uneasily at the singer as he got up from the piano. This poor friend of mine became hopelessly insane a few months afterwards, and that horrible, wild song rang perpetually through the rooms he occupied in the Maison de Santé of his retirement.

On the basis of this last report Mr. C. did what he could with the directors of the company, but it was of no use, and they declined to sanction further expenditure. Mr. C., whose kindness to me was that of an elder brother, said in his whimsical way, " Make us one of your ripping pies, and I'll have one more try at it with the two —— ": two of the most influential directors. So I made the gorgeous beefsteak pie, for which I had been famous among my friends since childhood, but C. came to me afterwards with a gloomy face and said, " No use, the pigs wolfed that scrumptious pie, and then, though I said you'd made it, declared that old Father William was to be ordered home at once, and the mines closed." I could not help laughing at the thought of a pie being expected to turn the decision of a body of hard-headed business men, but he was so hurt at my levity that I stopped to sympathise with him. He did not seem to regard his own position of discomfort at having introduced the affair to his company—a dead loss of many thousands of pounds.

My son now, at eight years old, proved too much for his French governess, so we arranged for him to go to a school at Blackheath, though he was two



WONERSH LODGE, NORTH PARK, ELTHAM

years younger than the age generally accepted there. The little girls were started afresh with a German governess, and on Willie's return from Spain he stayed at Eltham for a time.

We were pleased to see one another again, but once more the wearing friction caused by our totally dissimilar temperaments began to make us feel that close companionship was impossible, and we mutually agreed that he should have rooms in London, visiting Eltham to see myself and the children at week-ends. After a while the regularity of his week-end visits became very much broken, but he still arrived fairly regularly to take the children to Mass at Chislehurst on Sunday mornings, and he would often get me up to town to do hostess when he wished to give a dinner-party. I had all my life been well known at Thomas's Hotel, Berkeley Square, as my parents and family had always stayed there when in London. So here I used to help Willie with his parties, and to suffer the boredom incidental to this form of entertainment. He never seemed to have anyone at all amusing—with the exception of one or two old friends—Sir George and Lady O'Donnell, Major Whiteside and Graham, and I liked these much better at Eltham, where one had more time to talk, than at those dinners.

On one occasion Willie, who always said that even if only for the sake of our children I ought not to "drop out of everything," worried me into accepting invitations to a ball given by the Countess ——, whom I did not know, and for this I came up to town late in the afternoon, dined quietly at the hotel by myself,

and dressed for the ball, ready for Willie to fetch me as he had promised after his dinner with some friends. I was ready at half-past eleven as had been arranged, and the carriage came round for me at a quarter to twelve. At twelve the manageress, a friend from my childhood, came to see if she could "do anything for me" as Captain O'Shea was so late. At 12.30 the head waiter, who used to lift me into my chair at table on our first acquaintance, came to know if "Miss Katie" was anxious about "the Captain," and got snubbed by the manageress for his pains. At one o'clock, white with anger and trembling with mortification, I tore off my beautiful frock and got into bed. At nine o'clock the next morning Willie called, having only just remembered my existence and the ball to which he was to have taken me.

Little Major Whiteside was, I think, at that time the smallest man in the British army, and, in spite of the fact that they could see little else than busby when he was on horseback, his men trembled at his slightest roar, for he was a terrible little martinet. He and his two pretty sisters, who over-topped him so that if they stood each side of him he was invisible, had been very dear friends of ours for years. Although this valiant little warrior had the well-earned reputation in the army of being absolutely fearless, he could not stand the sudden and uproarious cawing of rooks aroused from slumber, and on my taking him a short cut to the station through my aunt's rookery, after a visit to us at Eltham, I was astounded at the bound of terror and volley of language that came from the little major when our disturbing feet roused the rooks.

Willie used to say that he was a V.C. hero, but only in patches.

Willie was now longing for some definite occupation, and he knew many political people. While he was on a visit to Ireland early in 1880 he was constantly urged by his friends, the O'Donnells and others, to try for a seat in the next Parliament. A dissolution seemed imminent. He had often talked of becoming a member for some Irish constituency, and now, on again meeting The O'Gorman Mahon in Ireland, he was very easily persuaded to stand in with him for County Clare. He wrote home to me to know what I thought of the idea, saying that he feared that, much as he should like it, the expenses would be almost too heavy for us to manage. I wrote back strongly encouraging him to stand, for I knew it would give him occupation he liked and keep us apart—and therefore good friends. Up to this time Willie had not met Mr. Parnell.

CHAPTER XIV

MR. PARNELL AND THE IRISH PARTY

"I loved those hapless ones—the Irish Poor—
All my life long.
Little did I for them in outward deed,
And yet be unto them of praise the meed
For the stiff fight I urged 'gainst lust and greed:
I learnt it there."

SIR WILLIAM BUTLER.

"THE introduction of the Arms Bill has interfered with Mr. Parnell's further stay in France, and it is probable he will be in his place in the House of Commons by the time this is printed."

This paragraph appeared in the *Nation* early in 1880. On the 8th March of that year, the Disraeli Parliament dissolved, and on the 29th April Mr. Gladstone formed his Ministry.

In the Disraeli Parliament Mr. Parnell was the actual, though Mr. Shaw had been the nominal, leader of the Irish Parliamentary Party since the death of Mr. Isaac Butt in 1879. Shaw continued the Butt tradition of moderation and conciliation which had made the Irish Party an unconsidered fraction in British politics. Parnell represented the new attitude of uncompromising hostility to all British parties and of unceasing opposition to all their measures until the grievances of Ireland were redressed. He carried the

majority of his Party with him, and in Ireland he was already the people's hero.

Born in June, 1846, Parnell was still a young man. He came of a fine race; he was a member of the same family as the famous poet, Thomas Parnell, as Lord Congleton, Radical reformer and statesman, and, above all, Sir John Parnell, who sat and worked with Grattan in Ireland's Great Parliament and shared with him the bitter fight against the Union. On his mother's side he was the grandson of the famous Commodore Charles Stewart, of the American Navy, whose bravery and success in the War of Independence are well known. It was natural that a man of such ancestry should become a champion of the rights of his native land.

Yet though in 1879 he was the virtual chief of the Irish Party, eight years before he was an Irish country gentleman, living quietly on his estates at Avondale in County Wicklow.

It is a mistake to say that his mother "planted his hatred of England" in him, as she so seldom saw him as a boy. He was sent to school in England at six years old, and he used to tell me how his father—who died when he (Charles S. Parnell) was twelve years old—would send for him to come to Ireland to see him. His mother, Mrs. Delia Parnell, lived chiefly in America, going over to Avondale that her children might be born in Ireland, and returning as soon as possible to America. After her husband's death she only visited the place occasionally, and altogether saw very little of her son Charles. He often told me how well he remembered being sent for in his father's last illness to go to him at Dublin, and the last journey with his dying father

back to Avondale. His father had made him his heir and a ward of Court.

In reality Parnell's hatred of England arose when he began to study the records of England's misgovernment in Ireland, and of the barbarities that were inflicted upon her peasantry in the name of England's authority.

For years before he left the seclusion of Avondale this hatred had been growing. He followed the Fenian movement with the liveliest interest, and he often accompanied his sister Fanny when she took her verses to the offices of the *Irish World.* The sufferings of the Fenian prisoners, so courageously borne, stirred his blood and awakened his indignation. It can be imagined with what inward anger the young man heard of the detective raid on his mother's house in Temple Street, Dublin—when they found and impounded the sword he was privileged to wear as an officer of the Wicklow Militia.

But it was the Manchester affair of 1867 and the execution of Allen, Larkin and O'Brien which crystallised his hatred of England. From that moment he was only biding his time. Yet he was slow to move, and loath to speak his mind, and, until he went to America in 1871, he was better known for his cricketing and his autumn shooting than for his politics. When he returned to Avondale with his brother John in 1872 the Ballot Act had just been passed, and it was the consciousness of the possibilities of the secret vote as a weapon against England that finally persuaded him to be a politician.

But, though he joined the newly formed Home Rule League, it was not until 1874 that he stood for Parliament in Dublin County. He came out at the

bottom of the poll. The election cost him £2,000; the £300 which he had received from the Home Rule League he handed back to them. In April, 1875, he stood for Meath and was placed at the top of the poll.

When he entered Parliament the Irish Party, as I have said, was of little account. The case for Ireland was argued by Isaac Butt with fine reasonableness and forensic skill, but it produced absolutely no effect. The English parties smiled and patted the Irish indulgently on the head. In Ireland all the more resolute and enthusiastic spirits had an utter contempt for their Parliamentary representatives; from the machine nothing was to be hoped. It was the mission of Parnell to change all that, to unite all the warring elements of the Nationalist movements into one force to be hurled against England.

But still he waited and watched—learning the rules of the House, studying the strength and weaknesses of the machine he was to use and to attack. He found it more instructive to watch Biggar than Butt, for Biggar was employing those methods of obstruction which Parnell afterwards used with such perfect skill. From June, 1876, he took a hand in affairs. Side by side with Biggar, he began his relentless obstruction of Parliamentary business until the demands of Ireland should be considered. Already in 1877 he was fighting Butt for the direction of the Irish Party. On September 1st of that year Parnell became president of the Home Rule Confederation of Great Britain in place of Butt, and the victory was really won. Thenceforward Parnell was the true leader of the Irish movement inside Parliament and out of it. He attracted

the support of Fenians by his uncompromising tactics and his fearless utterances, and when the New Departure was proclaimed by Michael Davitt (just out of prison) and John Devoy, and the Land League was formed in 1879, Parnell was elected president.

The objects of the League were " best to be attained by defending those who may be threatened with eviction for refusing to pay unjust rents; and by obtaining such reforms in the laws relating to land as will enable every tenant to become the owner of his holding by paying a fair rent for a limited number of years." The League was meant by its founders, Davitt and Devoy, to work for the abolition of landlordism in Ireland, which, in turn, should pave the way for separation. Though Parnell was himself working for Home Rule, the League became a tremendous driving power behind his constitutional demands.

For some months Disraeli's Government did nothing, while the agitation spread like wildfire. Then in November three of the leaders were arrested, on December 5th a fourth—and in a few days released! Ireland laughed, and the League grew. On December 21st Parnell and Dillon sailed for New York to appeal for funds to save the tenant farmers and to tighten the bond between the new movement and the revolutionary societies of America. His triumphal progress through the States and Canada, his reception by the Governors of States, members of Congress, judges and other representative men, and finally his appearance before Congress to develop his views on the Irish situation, are well known. It was on this journey—at Toronto—that he was first hailed as the "Uncrowned King."

The unexpected news of the dissolution summoned him home. In going out Disraeli tried to make Home Rule the issue of the election, but Lord Hartington—who was then leading the Liberal Party—and Mr. Gladstone refused to take up the challenge. All the English parties were united in hostility to Home Rule.

But the violent manifesto of Disraeli threw the Irish voting strength in England into the Liberal scale. The Liberals swept the country.

Curiously enough, even in Ireland the issue of the election was not Home Rule. There it was the land, and nothing but the land. For the harvest of 1879 had been the worst since the great famine; evictions were in full swing, and the Land League had begun its work.

The demand was for a measure securing the "three F's": Fixity of tenure, fair rents determined by a legal tribunal, and free sale of the tenant's interest. But in many constituencies the demand was for the extinction of landlordism.

Parnell carried the election on his back. He was fighting not only the Liberals and the Tories, but the moderate Home Rule followers of Mr. Shaw. His energy seemed inexhaustible; from one end of Ireland to the other he organised the campaign, and addressed meetings. The result was a triumph for his policy and for the Land League. Of the 61 Home Rulers elected, 39 were Parnellites.

CHAPTER XV

THE FIRST MEETING WITH MR. PARNELL

" *One evening he asked the miller where the river went.*
'*It goes down the valley,*' *answered he,* '*and turns a power of mills.*' "
R. L. STEVENSON.

WILLIE and The O'Gorman Mahon had been returned at the General Election, and many and varied were the stories The O'Gorman Mahon told me subsequently of their amusing experiences. How they kissed nearly every girl in Clare and drank with every man—and poor Willie loathed Irish whisky—how Willie's innate fastidiousness in dress brought gloom into the eyes of the peasantry till his unfeigned admiration of their babies and live stock, scrambling together about the cabins, "lifted a smile to the lip."

The O'Gorman Mahon was then a tall, handsome old man with a perfect snowstorm of white hair, and eyes as merry and blue as those of a boy. He could look as fierce as an old eagle on occasion, however, and had fought, in his day, more duels than he could remember. A fine specimen of the old type of Irishman.

When he came down to Eltham to see us, Willie and I took him over to Greenwich and gave him a fish dinner. We sat late into the night talking of Irish affairs, and The O'Gorman Mahon said to me, "If you meet Parnell, Mrs. O'Shea, be good to him. His begging

expedition to America has about finished him, and I don't believe he'll last the session out."

He went on to speak of Mr. Parnell; how aloof and reserved he was, and how he received any inquiries as to his obviously bad health with a freezing hostility that gave the inquirers a ruffled sense of tactlessness.

Willie broke in to say that he and I were going to give some political dinners in London and would ask Parnell, though he was sure he would not come. The O'Gorman Mahon paid some idle compliment, but I was not interested particularly in their stories of Parnell, though I mentally decided that if I gave any dinners to the Irish Party for Willie I would make a point of getting Parnell.

I was growing very tired, and was longing for our guest to go and catch his train for London, but he made no move, and Willie seemed to be lapsing into a gloomy trance when The O'Gorman Mahon electrified me by saying, "Now, Willie, 'twill slip easier into her ear from you!"

Willie roused himself and said, "You see, Katie, we . . ."

Then The O'Gorman Mahon took up the tale, and the gist of it was that nearly all the expenses of the election had fallen to poor Willie's share, that The O'Gorman Mahon was almost penniless—this announced by him with the grand air of a conqueror—and that Willie, with more zeal than discretion, had guaranteed the whole of the expenses for both, and where the amount, which they found totalled to about £2,000, was to come from they did not know.

Willie and The O'Gorman Mahon looked at me like disconsolate but hopeful schoolboys, and I cheered them up by promising to do what I could to get my aunt to help, though I really did not in the least think she would do so. However, their sanguine spirits rose once more, and at last The O'Gorman Mahon made the dash for his train that I was hoping for, first seizing my hands and kissing me on the cheek, and telling Willie that I was much too good for him. Willie did not like these pleasantries as a rule, but The O'Gorman Mahon had such a courtly way with him that he could only smile assent.

On the 26th of April the members of the Irish Party met in Dublin to elect a chairman, and the meeting was adjourned without coming to a decision, but in May Mr. Parnell was chosen as leader of the Party. Willie voted for him, with twenty-two others, and telegraphed to me to say that he had done so, but feared that Mr. Parnell might be too "advanced." The fact was that many people admired steady-going William Shaw, the then chairman, as being very "safe," and doubted whither their allegiance to Mr. Parnell would lead them. Years after, when their politics had diverged, Mr. Parnell said: "I was right when I said in '80, as Willie got up on that platform at Ennis, dressed to kill, that he was just the man we did not want in the Party."

After the meeting of Parliament Willie was insistent that I should give some dinner parties in London, and, as his rooms were too small for this purpose, we arranged to have a couple of private rooms at Thomas's Hotel—my old haunt in Berkeley

Square. There were no ladies' clubs in those days, but this hotel served me for many years as well as such a club could have done.

We gave several dinners, and to each of them I asked Mr. Parnell. Among the first to come were Mr. Justin McCarthy (the elder), Colonel Colthurst, Richard Power, Colonel Nolan, and several others; but—in spite of his acceptance of the invitation—Mr. Parnell did not come. Someone alluded to the "vacant chair," and laughingly defied me to fill it; the rest of our guests took up the tale and vied with each other in tales of the inaccessibility of Parnell, of how he ignored even the invitations of the most important political hostesses in London, and of his dislike of all social intercourse—though he had mixed freely in society in America and Paris before he became a politician for the sake of the Irish poor. I then became determined that I would get Parnell to come, and said, amid laughter and applause: "The uncrowned King of Ireland shall sit in that chair at the next dinner I give!"

One bright sunny day when the House was sitting I drove, accompanied by my sister, Mrs. Steele (who had a house in Buckingham Gate), to the House of Commons and sent in a card asking Mr. Parnell to come out and speak to us in Palace Yard.

He came out, a tall, gaunt figure, thin and deadly pale. He looked straight at me smiling, and his curiously burning eyes looked into mine with a wondering intentness that threw into my brain the sudden thought: "This man is wonderful—and different."

I asked him why he had not answered my last invitation to dinner, and if nothing would induce

him to come. He answered that he had not opened his letters for days, but if I would let him, he would come to dinner directly he returned from Paris, where he had to go for his sister's wedding.

In leaning forward in the cab to say good-bye a rose I was wearing in my bodice fell out on to my skirt. He picked it up and, touching it lightly with his lips, placed it in his button-hole.

This rose I found long years afterwards done up in an envelope, with my name and the date, among his most private papers, and when he died I laid it upon his heart.

This is the first letter I had from Mr. Parnell:—

London,
July 17, 1880.

My dear Mrs. O'Shea,—We have all been in such a "disturbed" condition lately that I have been quite unable to wander further from here than a radius of about one hundred *paces allons*. And this notwithstanding the powerful attractions which have been tending to seduce me from my duty towards my country in the direction of Thomas's Hotel.

I am going over to Paris on Monday evening or Tuesday morning to attend my sister's wedding, and on my return will write you again and ask for an opportunity of seeing you.—Yours very truly,
Chas. S. Parnell.

On his return from Paris Mr. Parnell wrote to me, and again we asked him to dinner, letting him name his own date. We thought he would like a quiet dinner, and invited only my sister, Mrs. Steele, my nephew, Sir Matthew Wood, Mr. Justin McCarthy, and a couple of others whose names I forget. On receiving his reply accepting the invitation for the

following Friday, we engaged a box at the Gaiety Theatre—where Marion Hood was acting (for whom I had a great admiration)—as we thought it would be a relief to the "Leader" to get away from politics for once.

On the day of the dinner I got this note:—

HOUSE OF COMMONS,
Friday.

MY DEAR MRS. O'SHEA,—I dined with the Blakes on Wednesday, and by the time dinner was over it was too late to go to the meeting—the Post Office is all right here.

I cannot imagine who originated the paragraph. I have certainly made no arrangements up to the present to go either to Ireland or America or announced any intention to anybody. —Yours,
CHAS. S. PARNELL.

He arrived late, but apologetic, and was looking painfully ill and white, the only life-light in his face being given by the fathomless eyes of rich brown, varying to the brilliance of flame. The depth of expression and sudden fire of his eyes held me to the day of his death.

We had a pleasant dinner, talking of small nothings, and, avoiding the controversial subject of politics, Mr. Parnell directed most of his conversation to my sister during dinner. She could talk brilliantly, and her quick, light handling of each subject as it came up kept him interested and amused. I was really anxious that he should have an agreeable evening, and my relief was great when he said that he was glad to go to the theatre with us, as the change of thought it gave was a good rest for him.

On arrival at the theatre he and I seemed to fall naturally into our places in the dark corner of the box facing the stage and screened from the sight of the audience, while my sister and the others sat in front.

After we had settled in our seats Mr. Parnell began to talk to me. I had a feeling of complete sympathy and companionship with him, as though I had always known this strange, unusual man with the thin face and pinched nostrils, who sat by my side staring with that curious intent gaze at the stage, and telling me in a low monotone of his American tour and of his broken health.

Then, turning more to me, he paused; and, as the light from the stage caught his eyes, they seemed like sudden flames. I leaned a little towards him, still with that odd feeling of his having always been there by my side; and his eyes smiled into mine as he broke off his theme and began to tell me of how he had met once more in America a lady to whom he had been practically engaged some few years before.

Her father would not dower her to go to Ireland, and Parnell would not think of giving up the Irish cause and settling in America. The engagement therefore hung fire; but on this last visit to America he had sought her out and found himself cold and disillusioned.

She was a very pretty girl, he said, with golden hair, small features and blue eyes. One evening, on this last visit, he went to a ball with her, and, as she was going up the stairs, she pressed into his

hand a paper on which was written the following verse:

> "Unless you can muse in a crowd all day
>   On the absent face that fixed you,
> Unless you can dream that his faith is fast
>   Through behoving and unbehoving,
> Unless you can die when the dream is past,
>   Oh, never call it loving."

He asked me who had written the lines, and I answered that it sounded like one of the Brownings (it is E. B. Browning's), and he said simply: "Well, I could not do all that, so I went home."

I suggested that perhaps the lady had suffered in his desertion, but he said that he had seen her, that same evening, suddenly much attracted by a young advocate named A——, who had just entered the room, and decided in his own mind that his vacillation had lost him the young lady. The strenuous work he had then put his whole heart into had driven out all traces of regret.

After this dinner-party I met him frequently in the Ladies' Gallery of the House. I did not tell him when I was going; but, whenever I went, he came up for a few minutes; and, if the Wednesday sittings were not very important or required his presence, he would ask me to drive with him. We drove many miles this way in a hansom cab out into the country, to the river at Mortlake, or elsewhere. We chiefly discussed Willie's chances of being returned again for Clare, in case another election was sprung upon us. Both Willie and I were very anxious to secure Mr.

Parnell's promise about this, as The O'Gorman Mahon was old, and we were desirous of making Willie's seat in Parliament secure.

While he sat by my side in the meadows by the river he promised he would do his best to keep Willie in Parliament, and to secure County Clare for him should the occasion arise. Thus we would sit there through the summer afternoon, watching the gay traffic on the river, in talk, or in the silence of tried friendship, till the growing shadows warned us that it was time to drive back to London.

Soon after my first meeting with Mr. Parnell, my sister, Mrs. Steele, invited Mr. Parnell, Mr. McCarthy and myself to luncheon. We had a very pleasant little party at her house. During lunch Mr. Parnell told us he was going to his place in Ireland for some shooting, and Mr. McCarthy and my sister chaffed him for leaving us for the lesser game of partridge shooting, but he observed gravely, " I have the partridges there, and here I cannot always have your society."

I had to leave early, as I was anxious to return to see my aunt; and Mr. Parnell said he would accompany me to the station. When we got to Charing Cross the train had already gone; and Mr. Parnell picked out a good horse from the cab rank, saying it would be much pleasanter to drive down on such a beautiful afternoon. We did so, but I would not let him stay, as I was not sure what state of confusion the house might be in, left in my absence in the possession of the children and governess. I told him I had to hurry over the park to my aunt, as



MR. PARNELL IN 1880

A portrait given by him to Mrs. O'Shea soon after their first meeting
Photographed by Mr. Parnell's nephew, Henry Thomson

really was the case, and he reluctantly returned to London.

On the next Wednesday evening Mr. Parnell was to dine with me at Thomas's Hotel. He met me at Cannon Street Station as the train came in, and asked me to have some tea with him at the hotel there and go on to Thomas's together. We went to the Cannon Street Hotel dining-rooms, but on looking in he saw some of the Irish members there and said it would be more comfortable for us in his private sitting-room. I was under the impression that he lived at Keppel Street, but he told me he had just taken rooms in the Cannon Street Hotel. We had tea in his sitting-room, and he talked politics to me freely till I was interested and at ease, and then lapsed into one of those long silences of his that I was already beginning to know were dangerous in the complete sympathy they evoked between us.

Presently I said, "Come! we shall be late!"; and he rose without a word and followed me downstairs. There were some members of his Party still standing about in the hall, but, as he always did afterwards when I was with him, he ignored them absolutely and handed me into a waiting cab.

He and I dined at Thomas's Hotel that evening, and after dinner I returned home to Eltham. Mr. Parnell left for Ireland by the morning mail.

From Dublin he wrote to me:—

September 9, 1880.

MY DEAR MRS. O'SHEA,—Just a line to say that I have arrived here, and go on to Avondale, Rathdrum, this evening, where I hope to hear from you before very long.

I may tell you also in confidence that I don't feel quite so content at the prospect of ten days' absence from London amongst the hills and valleys of Wicklow as I should have done some three months since.

The cause is mysterious, but perhaps you will help me to find it, or her, on my return.—Yours always,

CHAS. S. PARNELL.

Then from his home:—

AVONDALE, RATHDRUM,
September 11, 1880.

MY DEAR MRS. O'SHEA,—I take the opportunity which a few hours in Dublin gives me of letting you know that I am still in the land of the living, notwithstanding the real difficulty of either living or being, which every moment becomes more evident, in the absence of a certain kind and fair face.

Probably you will not hear from me again for a few days, as I am going into the mountains for some shooting, removed from post offices and such like consolations for broken-hearted politicians, but if, as I hope, a letter from you should reach me even there, I shall try and send you an answer.—Yours very sincerely,

CHAS. S. PARNELL.

CHAPTER XVI

EARLY CORRESPONDENCE

> "*Whate'er the senses take or may refuse*
> *The Mind's internal heaven shall shed her dews*
> *Of inspiration on the humblest lay.*"—WORDSWORTH.

WHENEVER I went to town, or elsewhere, I always returned at night to see that my children were all right and to be ready to go to my aunt as usual every morning. One day, on my return from a drive with my aunt, I found that my old nurse Lucy, who still lived with me, was very ill, having had a stroke of paralysis while I was away. It affected her speech and sight as well as the whole of one side, and I was very unhappy lest the maid whom I kept expressly to wait on her had hurt her in some way—the doctor said she must have had a shock. The dear old woman lay still, continuously feeling my fingers for my rings that she might know that I was with her, and evidently she wished to tell me something which her poor lips could not form. She lingered only a couple of days before she died and left a great void in my heart. My children missed their admiring old confidante sadly. She had always been devoted to me as the youngest of her "own babies," as she called my mother's children, and had shared in all my fortunes and misfortunes since I returned from Spain. She was always very proud, and so fearful of becoming a burden to anyone,

that she rented a room in her sister's house so that she should feel independent. So often, when "times were bad" with us, she would press some of her savings into my hand and say that "The Captain *must* want a little change, Dearie, going about as he does!"

In her earlier life she had had her romance, and had spent some years in saving up to marry her "sweetheart," as she called him; but shortly before the wedding her father's business failed, and she immediately gave him all her little nest-egg, with the result that her lover refused to marry her. So then, at the great age of ninety, after her blameless life had been passed since the age of sixteen in unselfish devotion to us all, we laid her to rest by the side of my father and mother at Cressing, Willie taking her down to Essex and attending the funeral.

As she lay dying I got this note from Mr. Parnell:—

DUBLIN,
September 22, 1880.

MY DEAR MRS. O'SHEA,—I cannot keep myself away from you any longer, so shall leave to-night for London.

Please wire me to 16 Keppel Street, Russell Square, if I may hope to see you to-morrow and where, after 4 p.m.—Yours always,
C. S. P.

Owing to the piteous clinging to my fingers of my old Lucy I was unable to go to London even for an hour to meet Mr. Parnell, so I telegraphed to that effect, and received the following letter:—

EUSTON STATION,
Friday evening, September 24, 1880.

MY DEAR MRS. O'SHEA,—On arriving at Keppel Street yesterday I found that your wire had just arrived, and that



LUCY GOLDSMITH

Nurse to the thirteen children of Sir John Page Wood and Lady Wood
She afterwards lived until 1880 with Mrs. O'Shea

the boy refused to leave it as I was not stopping there. Going at once to the district postal office I asked for and received the wire, and to-day went to London Bridge Station at 12.15.

The train from Eltham had just left, so I came on to Charing Cross and sent a note by messenger to you at Thomas's with directions to bring it back if you were not there, which turned out to be the case. I am very much troubled at not having seen you, especially as I must return to Ireland to-night—I came on purpose for you, and had no other business. I think it possible, on reflection, that the telegraph people may have wired you that they were unable to deliver your message, and, if so, must reproach myself for not having written you last night. —Your very disappointed C. S. P.

From Dublin he wrote me:

Saturday morning, September 25, 1880.

MY DEAR MRS. O'SHEA,—In my hurried note to you last night I had not time to sympathise with you in this troublesome time you have been going through recently; how I wish it might have been possible for me to have seen you even for a few minutes to tell you how very much I feel any trouble which comes to you.

I am just starting for New Ross, where there is a meeting to-morrow.

If you can spare time to write me to Avondale, the letters will reach me in due course.—Yours always, C. S. P.

September 29, 1880.

MY DEAR MRS. O'SHEA,—I have received your wire, but not the letter which you say you were writing me to Dublin for Monday.

I suppose then you may have sent it to Rathdrum instead, whither I am going this evening, and that I may soon have the happiness of reading a few words written by you.

I am due at Cork on Sunday, after which I propose to visit London again, and renew my attempt to gain a glimpse of

you. Shall probably arrive there on Tuesday if I hear from you in the meanwhile that you will see me.

On Friday evening I shall be at Morrison's on my way to Kilkenny for Saturday, and shall be intensely delighted to have a wire from you to meet me there.—Yours always,

CHAS. S. PARNELL.

Meanwhile Willie was in communication with Mr. Gladstone, Mr. Tintern (one of the Liberal agents) and others, in reference to a meeting held by him.

Mr. Tintern wrote from Tenby commenting with satisfaction on the report of Willie's successful meeting, on Willie's kind mention of the Government, and on the good the meeting must do by promoting orderly progress and better feeling between one class and another. But he expressed surprise that Willie should think the Government had not treated him and West Clare well. He at least . . . ! Mr. Gladstone wrote from Downing Street on the 21st September about the meeting in much the same terms. He expressed himself as gratified to think that the important local proceedings with regard to the land question showed the union of people and pastors against the extremists.

Life at Eltham went on in the same routine. My aunt was well, and would sit for long hours at the south door of her house—looking away up "King John's Chase"—the ruins of King John's Palace were at Eltham, and my aunt's park and grounds were part of the ancient Royal demesne. In these summer evenings she loved to sit at the top of the broad flight of shallow steps with me, and tell my little girls stories of her life of long ago. In her day all girls, big and

little, wore low-necked frocks with short sleeves, and she was always distressed that her "butterflies," as she called my two little girls, had long black legs instead of the white stockings and sandals of her youth.

She would repeat poetry to them by the hour, if I could get them to sit still long enough; and I sat by her side on these waning summer days, hearing her voice, but unheeding, dreaming in silence, as she talked to the children.

Sometimes her favourite Dr. Bader would bring his zither down from London and play to us; or my aunt and I would sit in the great tapestry room with all of the seven windows open, listening to the song of the æolian harp as the soft breeze touched its strings and died away in harmony through the evening stillness. And my aunt would doze in her chair while I dropped the book I had been reading to her and drifted into unknown harmonies and colour of life; waiting in the stillness of the summer evening for the meaning of that intent considering gaze, with the thousand fires behind it, that was always subconsciously present with me now.

Sometimes, too, my aunt would sing in her soft, gentle old voice the songs of her youth, to the accompaniment of her guitar. "We met, 'twas in a crowd," was a favourite old song of hers, half forgotten since she used to sing it to the music of her spinet seventy years before, but Dr. Bader found the words in an old book, and the dear old lady crooned it sentimentally to me as we sat waiting for the hooting of the owls which signalled to her maid the time for shutting her lady's windows.

And I was conscious of sudden gusts of unrest and revolt against these leisured, peaceful days where the chiming of the great clock in the hall was the only indication of the flight of time, and the outside world of another age called to me with the manifold interests into which I had been so suddenly plunged with the power to help in the making and marring of a destiny.

CHAPTER XVII

AT ELTHAM

"*But then—I supposed you to be but a fellow guest?*" "*Ah, no,*" *he answered me in that cold unshaken voice,* "*I have but come home.*"—(The Bagman.)—Honora Shee.

In the autumn of 1880 Mr. Parnell came to stay with us at Eltham, only going to Dublin as occasion required. Willie had invited him to come, and I got in some flowers in pots and palms to make my drawing-room look pretty for him.

Mr. Parnell, who was in very bad health at that time, a few days later complained of sore throat, and looked, as I thought, mournfully at my indoor garden, which I industriously watered every day. It then dawned upon me that he was accusing this of giving him sore throat, and I taxed him with it. He evidently feared to vex me, but admitted that he did think it was so, and "wouldn't it do if they were not watered so often?" He was childishly touched when I at once had them all removed, and he sank happily on to the sofa, saying that "plants were such damp things!"

His throat became no better, and he looked so terribly ill when—as he often did now—he fell asleep from sheer weakness on the sofa before the fire, that I became very uneasy about him. Once, on awaking from one of these sleeps of exhaustion, he told me abruptly that he believed it was the green in the

carpet that gave him sore throat. There and then we cut a bit out, and sent it to London to be analysed, but without result. It was quite a harmless carpet.

During this time I nursed him assiduously, making him take nourishment at regular intervals, seeing that these day-sleeps of his were not disturbed, and forcing him to take fresh air in long drives through the country around us. At length I had the satisfaction of seeing his strength gradually return sufficiently to enable him to take the exercise that finished the process of this building-up, and he became stronger than he had been for some years. I do not think anyone but we who saw him then at Eltham, without the mask of reserve he always presented to the outside world, had any idea of how near death's door his exertions on behalf of the famine-stricken peasants of Ireland had brought him.

Once in that autumn, after he came to us, I took him for a long drive in an open carriage through the hop-growing district of Kent. I had not thought of the fact that hundreds of the poorest of the Irish came over for the hop-picking, and might recognise him.

After driving over Chislehurst Common and round by the lovely Crays, we came right into a crowd of the Irish "hoppers"—men, women, and children In a moment there was a wild surge towards the carriage, with cries of "The Chief! The Chief!" and "Parnell! Parnell! Parnell!" The coachman jerked the horses on to their haunches for fear of knocking down the enthusiastic men and women who were crowding up—trying to kiss Parnell's hand, and calling for "a few words."

He lifted his cap with that grave, aloof smile of his, and said no, he was not well enough to make the smallest of speeches, but he was glad to see them, and would talk to them when they went home to Ireland. Then, bidding them to "mind the little ones," who were scrambling about the horses' legs, to the manifest anxiety of the coachman, he waved them away, and we drove off amid fervent "God keep your honours!" and cheers.

These Irish hop-pickers were so inured to privation in their own country that they were very popular among the Kentish hop-farmers, as they did not grumble so much as did the English pickers at the scandalously inefficient accommodation provided for them.

Often before Parnell became really strong I used to watch for hours beside him as he slept before the drawing-room fire, till I had to rouse him in time to go to the House. Once, when he was moving restlessly, I heard him murmur in his sleep, as I pulled the light rug better over him: "Steer carefully out of the harbour—there are breakers ahead."

He now had all the parcels and letters he received sent on to me, so that I might open them and give him only those it was necessary for him to deal with. There were hundreds of letters to go through every week, though, as he calmly explained, "If you get tired with them, leave them and they'll answer themselves."

Often among the parcels there were comestibles, and among these every week came a box of eggs without the name and address of the sender. I was glad to see

these eggs as the winter came on and with it the usual reluctance of our hens to provide us with sufficient eggs, but Mr. Parnell would not allow me to use them, for he said: "They might be eggs, but then again they might not," and I had to send them a good distance down the garden and have them broken to make sure of their genuineness, and then he would worry lest our dogs should find them and poison themselves.

On his visits to Ireland he wrote to me continually:—

DUBLIN,
Tuesday.

MY DEAR MRS. O'SHEA,—I have just a moment on my return from Ennis to catch the late post and reply to your wire.

I received your two letters quite safely, and you may write me even nicer ones with perfect confidence. I blame myself very much for not having written you on my way through Dublin on Saturday, as you were evidently anxious about your notes, but I hope you will forgive me as there were only a few minutes to spare.

I trust to see you in London on Tuesday next. Is it true that Captain O'Shea is in Paris, and, if so, when do you expect his return? . . . I have had no shooting, weather too wet, but shall try to-morrow, when you may expect some heather.

DUBLIN,
Friday evening, October 2, 1880.

Have just received your wire; somehow or other something from you seems a necessary part of my daily existence, and if I have to go a day or two without even a telegram it seems dreadful.

I want to know how you intend to excuse yourself for telling

me not to come on purpose if I must return. (To Ireland.) Of course, I am going on purpose to see you; and it is also unhappily true that I cannot remain long.

Shall cross Monday evening, and shall call at Morrison's for a message.

Please write or wire me in London to 16 Keppel Street, Russell Square, where I shall call on Tuesday.

DUBLIN,
Monday night, October 4, 1880.

Just arrived. . . . I write you on the only bit of paper to be found at this late hour (a scrap taken from one of your own notes), to say that I hope to reach London to-morrow (Tuesday) evening and to see you on Wednesday when and where you wish. Please write or wire me to Keppel Street. This envelope will present the appearance of having been tampered with, but it has not.

DUBLIN,
Tuesday evening, October 5, 1880.

A frightful gale has been blowing all day in Channel and still continues.

Under these circumstances shall postpone crossing till to-morrow evening.

Can meet you in London at 9 to-morrow evening anywhere you say.

DUBLIN,
Monday evening, October 17, 1880.

MY OWN LOVE,—You cannot imagine how much you have occupied my thoughts all day and how very greatly the prospect of seeing you again very soon comforts me.

On Monday evening I think it will be necessary for me to go to Avondale; afterwards I trust, if things are propitious on your side, to return to London on Tuesday or Wednesday.—Yours always, C.

AVONDALE, RATHDRUM,
October 22, 1880.

I was very much pleased to receive your wire this morning, forwarded from Dublin, that you had received my note of last Saturday. I was beginning to fear that it had gone wrong.

After I had finished at Roscommon and received your message in Dublin on Monday I decided upon coming here where I have been unexpectedly detained.

If all goes well you will see me in London on Monday evening next. . . . I send you enclosed one or two poor sprigs of heather, which I plucked for you three weeks ago, also my best love, and hope you will believe that I always think of you as the one dear object whose presence has ever been a great happiness to me.

Meanwhile the Government had been temporising with the land question. They had brought in a very feeble Compensation for Disturbances Bill and they had allowed it to be further weakened by amendments. This Bill was rejected by the House of Lords, with the result that the number of evictions in Ireland grew hourly greater and the agitation of the Land League against them; outrages, too, were of common occurrence and increased in intensity.

Speaking at Ennis on September 19th Mr. Parnell enunciated the principle which has since gone by the name of "The Boycott."

"What are you to do," he asked, "to a tenant who bids for a farm from which another tenant has been evicted?"

Several voices cried: "Shoot him!"

"I think," went on Mr. Parnell, "I heard somebody say 'Shoot him!' I wish to point out to you a very much better way—a more Christian and charit-

able way, which will give the lost man an opportunity of repenting. When a man takes a farm from which another has been unjustly evicted, you must shun him on the roadside when you meet him; you must shun him in the shop; you must shun him on the fair-green and in the market-place, and even in the place of worship, by leaving him alone; by putting him into a sort of moral Coventry; by isolating him from the rest of the country, as if he were a leper of old—you must show him your detestation of the crime he has committed."

Forster, the Irish Secretary, who had some amount of sympathy for the tenants, was, however, a Quaker, and the outrages horrified him more than the evictions. Nor, strangely, was he able to connect the one with the other. Undoubtedly the evictions almost ceased, but, said he, they have ceased because of the outrages, and the outrages were the work of the Land League; and he pressed for the arrest of its leaders. This was unwise, considering that it was Parnell who had advocated the abandonment of violence for the moral suasion of the boycott.

On November 3rd Forster decided to prosecute the leaders of the Land League, and among them Parnell, Dillon, Biggar, Sexton and T. D. Sullivan. Two days later, in a speech at Dublin, Parnell expressed his regret that Forster was degenerating from a statesman to a tool of the landlords. Biggar when he heard the news exclaimed, "Damned lawyers, sir, damned lawyers! Wasting the public money! Wasting the public money! Whigs damned rogues! Forster damned fool!"

DUBLIN,*
November 4, 1880.

MY DEAR MRS. O'SHEA,—I take advantage of almost the first moment I have had to myself since leaving you to write a few hasty lines. And first I must again thank you for all your kindness, which made my stay at Eltham so happy and pleasant.

The thunderbolt, as you will have seen, has at last fallen, and we are in the midst of loyal preparations of a most appalling character.

I do not suppose I shall have an opportunity of being in London again before next Thursday, but trust to be more fortunate in seeing Captain O'Shea then than the last time.—Yours very truly,
CHAS. S. PARNELL.

DUBLIN,*
Saturday.

MY DEAR MRS. O'SHEA,—I hope to arrive in London on *Tuesday* morning, and trust to have the pleasure of seeing you before I leave. Do you think you shall be in town on Tuesday ?

Kindly address 16 Keppel Street.—Yours very truly,
CHAS. S. PARNELL.

On November 5th that year the village was great on the subject of "gunpowder, treason, and plot," and during dinner that evening there was such a noise and shouting outside my house that I asked the maid who was waiting what all the excitement was about.

She answered breathlessly that "the procession, ma'am, have got Miss Anna Parnell in a effigy 'longside of the Pope, and was waiting outside for us to see before they burnt 'em in the village."

* These letters were really written from London.

This electrifying intelligence was received with grave indifference by Mr. Parnell till the disappointed maid left the room; then with a sudden bubble of laughter—"Poor Anna! Her pride in being burnt, as a menace to England, would be so drowned in horror at her company that it would put the fire out!"

The cheering and hooting went on for some time outside the house, but, finding we were not to be drawn, the crowd at last escorted the effigies down to the village and burnt them, though with less amusement than they had anticipated.

DUBLIN,*
November 6, 1880.

MY DEAR MRS. O'SHEA,—You can have very little idea how dreadfully disappointed I felt on arriving here this evening not to find a letter from either you or Captain O'Shea. I send this in hope that it may induce you to write in reply to my last letter and telegram, which would appear not to have reached you.—Yours very sincerely, CHAS. S. PARNELL.

AVONDALE,
Monday.

MY DEAR MRS. O'SHEA,—I enclose keys, which I took away by mistake. Will you kindly hand enclosed letter to the proper person † and oblige,—Yours very truly,
CHAS. S. PARNELL.

DUBLIN,
Wednesday night, November 11, 1880.

MY DEAREST LOVE,—I have made all arrangements to be in London on Saturday morning, and shall call at Keppel Street for a letter from you. It is quite impossible for me to

* Sent to Dublin to be posted.
† Myself.

tell you just how very much you have changed my life, what a small interest I take in what is going on about me, and how I detest everything which has happened during the last few days to keep me away from you—I think of you always, and you must never believe there is to be any "fading." By the way, you must not send me any more artificial letters. I want as much of your own self as you can transfer into written words, or else none at all.—Yours always, C. S. P.

A telegram goes to you, and one to W.,* to-morrow, which are by no means strictly accurate.

DUBLIN,
December 2, 1880.

MY DEAR MRS. O'SHEA,—I succeeded in getting the train at Euston with just ten minutes to spare, and, arriving here this morning, found that my presence to-day was indispensable.

I need not tell you how much I regretted leaving Eltham so suddenly; but we cannot always do as we wish in this world.

My stay with you has been so pleasant and charming that I was almost beginning to forget my other duties; but Ireland seems to have gotten on very well without me in the interval.

Trusting to see you again next week on my way to Paris. —Yours very sincerely, CHAS. S. PARNELL.

I have been exceedingly anxious all day at not receiving your promised telegram to hear how you got home.

* Captain O'Shea.

CHAPTER XVIII

THE LAND LEAGUE TRIALS

The surest way to prevent seditions is to take away the matter of them.
—LORD BACON.

THROUGH the whole of 1880 Parnell was determinedly organising the Land League throughout Ireland, and during the winter, doubtless encouraged by the enormous distress that prevailed over the whole country, the force and power of the League grew with a rapidity that surpassed even the expectations of Parnell and his party. All through the vacation Parnell and his followers held meetings in carefully calculated areas of Ireland, and in his speeches Parnell explained the meaning and wide-reaching scope of the League's agitation, i.e. that tenant farmers were to trust in their own combination alone and "should give no faith to the promises of the English Ministers."

During the early session that year Parnell had introduced a Bill called "Suspension of Ejectments Bill," and this first pressed upon the House the necessity of dealing with the Irish landlord troubles. Parnell's party urged this Bill with so united a front that Mr. Gladstone was obliged to consider the main substance of it, and he agreed to insert a clause in the "Relief of Distress Bill" which would deal with impending

evictions of Irish tenants. But the Speaker of the House held that the interpolation of such a clause would not be "in order," and the Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. Forster) then, by Mr. Gladstone's direction, brought in his "Disturbances Bill," which was to all practical purposes Parnell's Bill under another name.

In the course of the debate on this Bill Mr. Gladstone himself said that "in the circumstances of distress prevalent in Ireland (at that time) a sentence of eviction is the equivalent of a sentence of death." These absolutely true words of Gladstone's were used by Parnell very many times during his Land League tours both in speeches and privately, and many times he added—as so often he did to me at home—bitter comment upon the apathy of the English Government, upon the curious insensibility of the English law-makers, who knew these things to be true in Ireland and yet were content to go on in their policy of drift, unless forced into action by those who *saw* the appalling reality of the distress among the Irish poor that was so comfortably deplored in London.

In this connection Parnell used to say that the fundamental failure in the English government of Ireland was: First, the complete inability of the Ministers in power to realise anything that was not before their eyes; and, secondly, their cast-iron conviction that Ireland was the one country of the world that was to be understood and governed by those to whom she was little but a name.

In all this time of trouble and eviction Parnell went backwards and forwards between England (Eltham) and Ireland as occasion required, and so

successful were his efforts in spreading the agitation and linking up the League that the Government became uneasy as to the outcome of this new menace to landlordism. Finally Parnell and fourteen of his followers were put on trial, charged with "conspiracy to impoverish landlords." Parnell, of course, went over to Ireland for these "State trials," but he considered the whole thing such a farce, in that it was an impotent effort of the Government to intimidate him, that he could not take it seriously in any way. No jury (in Ireland) would agree to convict him he was well aware, and he attended the trials chiefly, he said, for the "look of the thing," and to give the support of his presence to his colleagues. Incidentally he told me on one occasion that he had considerably hurried the jury when he was very anxious to catch a train in time for the night mail to England (Eltham) by "willing" them to agree (to disagree) without the long discussion of local politics with which all self-respecting Irish jurors beguile the weary ways of law. He observed that here, in the question of how far an unconscious agent can be "willed" into a desired action, he had discovered another and most entrancing study for us when we had more time to go into it thoroughly.

Talking of the Land League's procedure against the interests of the Irish landlords, I may, I think, here pertinently remind those who have, among so many other accusations, brought against Parnell the charge of self-seeking in regard to money matters, that Parnell himself was an Irish landlord and of very considerable estates, and that this land campaign (really, of course, directed against eviction) meant, to

all practical purposes, the loss of his rents, and that not only for a time, as in other cases, but, with the very generous interpretation put upon his wishes by the "Chief's" tenants, for all time—or rather for all his lifetime. Captain O'Shea also had certain estates in Ireland, and naturally, not being in sympathy with Parnell's policy, but being at heart a thorough Whig and a strong advocate for Mr. Shaw, the ex-leader of the Irish party, he was furious at the League's anti-landlord work, and refused to have any hand in it. He considered that hapless as was the plight of those who had to pay in rent the money they did not possess, that of the landlord whose rent was his all was but little to be preferred.

During this period the stories of the evictions brought home to me by Parnell himself made my heart sick, and often he sat far into the night at Eltham speaking in that low, broken monotone, that with him always betokened intense feeling strongly held in check, of the terrible cruelty of some of the things done in the name of justice in unhappy Ireland. How old people, and sometimes those sick beyond recovery, women with the children they had borne but a few hours before, little children naked as they had come into the world, all thrust out from the little squalid cabins which were all they had for home, thrust out on the roadside to perish, or to live as they could. I in my English ignorance used to say: "Why did they not go into the workhouse or to neighbours?" and Parnell would look wonderingly at me as he told me that for the most part such places were few and far between in Ireland, and "neighbours," good as they were

to each other, were in the same trouble. There were instances where a wife would beg, *and with none effect,* that the bailiffs and police should wait but the little half-hour that her dying husband drew his last breath; and where a husband carried his wife from her bed to the "shelter" of the rainswept moor that their child might be born out of the sight of the soldiers deputed to guard the officials who had been sent to pull their home about their ears. And, remembering these and so many other tales of some of the 50,000 evictions that he afterwards calculated had taken place in Ireland, I have never wondered at the implacable hatred of England that can never really die out of the Irish heart.

On December 4th, 1880, he wrote to me from Dublin:

I was exceedingly pleased to receive your letters; to say the truth, I have been quite homesick since leaving Eltham, and news from you seems like news from home.

The Court refused our application to-day for a postponement of the trial (of the Land League), but this we expected, and it does not much signify, as it turns out that we need not necessarily attend the trial unless absolutely directed to do so by the Court.

You will also be pleased to hear that the special jury panel, of which we obtained a copy last night, is of such a character as in the opinion of competent judges to give us every chance of a disagreement by the jury in their verdict, but we cannot, of course, form an absolute conclusion until the jury has been sworn, when we shall be able to tell pretty certainly one way or the other.

Since writing Captain O'Shea it does not look as if I could get further away from Ireland than London, as Paris is inconvenient from its distance.

I have no letter from him yet in reply to mine.

And again on the 9th:—

I returned from Waterford last night, and shall probably get through all necessary work here by Saturday evening so as to enable me to start for London on Sunday morning. I do not know how long I can remain in London, but shall run down and see you on Monday, and perhaps my plans will be more fixed by that time.

I have decided not to attend any more meetings until after the opening of Parliament, as everything now can go on without me.

Kindly inform Captain O'Shea that the meeting of Irish members will be in Dublin on the 4th January.

On December 12th of that year Mr. Parnell wrote from Avondale to say that the jury panel was to be struck on the following Monday for the prosecution of the Land League.

. . . And it will be necessary for me to see it before giving final directions.

I have consequently postponed my departure till Monday evening.

I have come here to arrange my papers and find a number which I should not like to destroy, and which I should not like the Government to get hold of in the event of their searching my house in the troublous times which appear before us. May I leave them at Eltham?

And the next day:—

I have just received a note from Healy, who is to be tried at Cork on Thursday, saying that his counsel thinks it of the utmost importance I should be present.

This is very hard lines on me, as I had looked forward to a little rest in London before my own trial commences; but I do not see how it can be helped, as Healy's is the first of the State trials, and it is of the utmost importance to secure an

acquittal and not merely a disagreement. I shall leave Cork on Thursday night and arrive in London Friday evening, and shall call to see you at Eltham Saturday. Your letters, one directed here and the others to Morrison's, reached me in due course, and I hope to hear from you again very soon.

Parnell, now, always made my house his headquarters in England, and on his return from Ireland after the trials came down at once as soon as he had ascertained that I was alone.

There were times when he wished to keep quiet and let no one know where he was; and, as it became known to the Government that Mr. Parnell frequented my house a good deal, it was somewhat difficult to avoid the detectives who were employed to watch his comings and goings.

On one occasion in 1880 he was informed privately that his arrest for "sedition" was being urged upon the Government, and that it would be well to go abroad for a short time. I think his enigmatic reply, "I will disappear for a few weeks," must have puzzled his informant. He came down to me at night, and when I answered his signal at my sitting-room window, and let him in, he told me with a deprecating smile that I must hide him for a few weeks. As I sat watching him eat the supper I always had ready for him at 3 a.m. I felt rather hopeless, as he was a big man, and I did not see how he could be hidden from the servants. He said the latter must not know he was there, as they would talk to the tradespeople, and they to the Government men. He did not wish to be arrested until later on, when it might be more useful than not.

Then he awaited suggestions, and at length we decided that a little room opening out of my own must be utilised for him, as I always kept it locked and never allowed a servant into it—except very occasionally to "turn it out." It was a little boudoir dressing-room, and had a sofa in it.

Mr. Parnell was then still feeling ill and run down, and enjoyed his fortnight's absolute rest in this room. None of the servants knew that he was there, and I took all his food up at night, cooking little dainty dishes for him at the open fire, much to his pleasure and amusement. He spent the time very happily, resting, writing "seditious" speeches for future use, and reading "Alice in Wonderland." This book was a favourite of his, and I gave it to him with the solemnity that befitted his grave reading of it. I do not think he ever thought it in the least amusing, but he would read it earnestly from cover to cover, and, without a smile, remark that it was a "curious book."

In all this fortnight no one had the least idea that he was in the house, and the only comment I ever heard upon my prisoner's diet was that "the mistress ate much more when she had her meals served in her sitting-room."

At the end of this fortnight he had arranged to go to Paris on some Land League business, and wanted me to go to see him off. He had brought certain political correspondence from Avondale and London and placed it in my charge, and this I kept in a box in this little private room, where I hid him. But there were two papers that he did not wish left even here, and, fearing arrest, could not carry on him. For these

he had a wide, hollow gold bracelet made in Paris, and after inserting the papers he screwed the bracelet safely on my arm; there it remained for three years, and was then unscrewed by him and the contents destroyed.

The winter of 1880 was terribly cold, and as I let him out of the house in the bitterly cold morning I wished he did not consider it necessary to go to Paris by such a roundabout route as he had chosen.

However, we drove off to Lewisham that morning, quite unobserved; from thence we went by train to New Cross, and drove by cab to London Bridge. At Vauxhall we started for Lowestoft; for Mr. Parnell had arranged to go to Paris via Harwich. I was anxious about him, for the cold was intense, and the deep snow over the large dreary waste of salt marshes seemed reflected in his pallor. Our train slowly passed through the dreary tract of country, feet deep in its white covering, and we could see no sign of life but an occasional seagull vainly seeking for food, and sending a weird call through the lonely silences.

I wrapped Parnell up in his rugs as he tried to sleep. I loathed the great white expanse that made him look so ill, and I wished I had him at home again, where I could better fight the great fear that so often beset my heart: that I could not long keep off the death that hovered near him. A lady and gentleman in the carriage remarked to me—thinking he slept—that my husband looked terribly ill, could they do anything? And I noticed the little smile of content that flitted over his face as he heard me briskly reply

that, No, he had been ill, but was so much better and stronger that I was not at all uneasy. It was the cold glare of the snow that made him look so delicate, but he was really quite strong. He hated to be thought ill, and did not see the doubt in their faces at my reply.

Arrived at Lowestoft I insisted upon his resting and having a good meal, after which he felt so cheered up that he decided to return to London with me, and go to Paris by the usual route the next day!

We had a new Irish cook at this time, from County Tipperary, and her joy exceeded all bounds when she learnt that the Irish leader was really in the house and she was to cook for him. I had to ask Mr. Parnell to see her for a moment, as she was too excited to settle to her cooking. Directly she got into the room Ellen fell down on her knees and kissed his hands, much to his horror, for, although used to such homage in Ireland, he disliked it extremely, and he told me with some reproach that he had expected to be quite free from that sort of thing in my house.

At Christmas he tipped my servants generously, and indeed Ellen and the parlourmaid Mary vied with each other in their attention to his comfort. The enthusiasm of the cook was so great that she bought an enormous gold locket, and, having inserted a portrait of Mr. Parnell in it, wore it constantly. Mary, not to be outdone, thereupon bought a locket of identically the same design, and wore it with an air of defiance, when bringing in tea, on New Year's Day.

This was against all regulations, and I said laugh-

ingly to Mr. Parnell that he was introducing lawlessness into my household. He answered, "Leave it to me," and when Mary appeared again he said gently to her, "Mary, that is a magnificent locket, and I see you are kind enough to wear my portrait in it. Mrs. O'Shea tells me that Ellen has bought one also, but I just want you and Ellen not to wear them outside like that, for Mrs. O'Shea lets me come down here for a rest, and if people know I'm here I shall be worried to death with politics and people calling." So Mary promised faithfully, and Ellen came running in to promise too, and to threaten vengeance on "the others" if absolute silence was not observed. The lockets went "inside," and only a tiny bit of chain was allowed to show at the throat in evidence of homage continued, though hidden.

Meanwhile, events were fusing in Ireland. Parnell had gone over there immediately after Christmas. From Dublin he wrote:—

DUBLIN,
Monday evening, December 27, 1880.

MY DEAR MRS. O'SHEA,—I have been exceedingly anxious all day at not receiving your promised telegram to hear how you got home; trust I may have something to-morrow morning that it is all right.*—Yours in haste, C. S. P.

MORRISON'S HOTEL,
Tuesday, December 28, 1880.

MY DEAREST WIFE,—You will be delighted to learn that everything is proceeding first-rate so far.

The jury sworn to-day cannot possibly convict us, and

* That Captain O'Shea had left Eltham for Madrid.

there is a very fair chance of an acquittal. I do not think the Government will attempt to prevent me from being present at the opening of Parliament, though I am not quite sure yet whether it will be prudent for me to leave until Wednesday evening. So far as I can see there is no necessity for the presence of any of the Traversers; one of them, Gordon, who has broken his leg, has not appeared at all, and his absence has not been even mentioned or noticed.

I was immensely relieved by your letter this morning. You must take great care of yourself for my sake and your and my future.—Yours always, C. S. P.

I have wired and written to Madrid* explaining situation lest my observations at yesterday's meeting as to doubt of my being in Parliament, intended to throw dust in eyes of Government, might be literally interpreted.

DUBLIN,
Thursday, December 30, 1880.

MY DEAREST LOVE,—Your letters have reached me quite safely, and you cannot tell how much pleasure they give me. I fear I was very foolish to allow you to come with me the day of my departure; I felt sure it would do much harm, and until your first letter arrived I was in a continual panic lest some dreadful disaster had happened.

That my poor love should have suffered so much makes my heart very sore, and she must take great care of herself for the sake of *our* future. . . .

I enclose letter from W.†—Yours always affectionately,

C. S. P.

Will send you photo to-morrow.

DUBLIN,
January 3, 1881.

MY DEAREST WIFIE,—Was most delighted on return this morning from Avondale to find your three letters and telegrams. I think it would make you happy and more contented during

* To Captain O'Shea. † Captain O'Shea.

my absence if you knew how I watched for your letters, and how often I read and re-read them.

I felt very much tempted to run over and spend the New Year and Sunday with you, but feared you might not be alone.

It pains me very much that my own love was unhappy about that stupid thing in the *Freeman* on Thursday. An old and ugly woman with whom I was very slightly acquainted, but who wanted to put herself *en evidence*, perched herself just behind me, and got a gentleman sitting next to her to hand me down a slip of paper, on which was written some message of congratulation. I only rewarded her with a stare, did not even bow or smile, and certainly sent no communication of any kind in reply. That was all. I will ask my own dearest to believe in me while I am away, and never again to feel unhappiness from want of confidence.

I have made all arrangements to leave by mail on Wednesday morning, and shall be with my own wifie on Wednesday evening about eight.—Yours, C. S. P.

Mr. Parnell held the Party meeting in Dublin on January 4th, and returned to me on January 5th, in time for the meeting of the House (on 6th January, 1881), not having thought it necessary to remain in Ireland till the termination of the trials—a circumstance which, curiously enough, was not publicly remarked upon. We spent some days together at Eltham, and I took Mr. Parnell to see my aunt, who was much charmed with him. His quiet manners and soft, clear voice pleased her greatly, as also did his personal appearance. She took his arm, and paced up and down the tapestry room with him, while she told him how she was introduced to O'Connell in the old days, when her husband, Benjamin Wood, was M.P. for Southwark. She had met O'Connell

at the House, and heard what was said to have been one of his greatest speeches. She said, "I much prefer your voice, Mr. Parnell, for Daniel O'Connell's enunciation was startling to me."

Though such a great age my aunt had still a very pretty round arm, and as she always wore the net sleeves of her youth, fastened with old-fashioned bracelets, Mr. Parnell noticed this, and commented upon the fact to me. The old lady was much gratified when I told her of this. She enlisted his sympathy by telling him that she had to pay £500 a year in order to keep her beautiful old grounds intact, as the Crown desired to sell the place for building lots, and she was determined to die in the old house she had lived in for over fifty years.

The State trial ended on January 25th, 1881, the foreman of the jury stating: "We are unanimous that we cannot agree," as Mr. Parnell had assured me they would. He was in Court and loudly cheered as he hastened off to catch the boat to England.

CHAPTER XIX

PARLIAMENTARY ASSOCIATIONS

"*Live to-day—the past is registered—the future is unguessed—the instant ours.*"—MORTIMER COLLINS.

FORSTER'S Coercion Bill was introduced on January 24th, 1881, and on the 25th Mr. Gladstone moved that it should have precedence of all other business before the House. Mr. Parnell fiercely opposed this motion, and kept his followers hard at work in opposition—thus forcing the House to sit from 4 p.m. on Tuesday until 2 p.m. of the next day. The details of these sittings have been recounted *ad nauseam*, and I need not repeat them here, but only record Parnell's fierce joy in these political fights, and my pride in him as I watched him from the Ladies' Gallery. Sometimes Willie would wish to give the seats he secured in the Ladies' Gallery to friends of his, and on such occasions I always knew that Mr. Parnell would ballot one for me. Of course, later on I could always secure a seat without ballot, if one was vacant, as I had to wait to receive messages from Mr. Parnell and Mr. Gladstone, and it was made known to the attendants that on any important occasion I held priority of place.

On January 27th the debate was resumed, and the House sat continuously for forty-one hours. Mr. Par-

nell retired to the Westminster Palace Hotel for a few hours' rest during this sitting, and after the little rest drove quickly to one of our meeting places to tell me of his plans before I went down to Eltham.

As a rule, after an all-night sitting he used to drive down to Eltham in order not to become well known on the Eltham railway, and come through the conservatory into my sitting-room, where I would have supper ready for him before the fire, with his smoking-jacket and slippers ready to put on. He seldom spoke after his first greeting. He would take off his frock-coat and boots, and, when I slipped on the others for him, he would eat his supper quite silently, thinking over the events of the night. I never worried him to talk. Supper finished, he would light a cigar and sit down in his own arm-chair, saying, "Well, Queenie, the Old Man spoke to-night," or So-and-so spoke, and then slowly tell me of all that had passed during the sitting, and his opinion of the present and future, so far as politics were concerned.

Sometimes when he had spoken himself he would say: "I did not speak well to-night," and sometimes it was: "I lost that quotation you gave me and brought it out sideways, and there it was all the time crushed up in my hand! Then I forgot the fellow's name and called him 'the poet.'"

"Well, Shakespeare can be called 'the poet,'" I would return soothingly.

"Yes? Is that so? It seemed to worry some of the reporters; one came and asked me what I meant! You must make me learn it better next time."

Once he began to talk he confided all his thoughts to me unreservedly, and the more freely that he had not been worried to talk when he came in cold or tired. He used to say that it was such a relief to get right away from the House when a sitting was over, and he enjoyed the drive down to Eltham in a hansom cab every night or early morning. It was only an eight-miles drive, but part of it was then very pleasant, through country lanes and over a common. Now London has swallowed up most of these pretty bits.

After relieving his mind of all political affairs of the day he would talk of things that were of home interest to us—of his stone quarries at Arklow, his saw-mills, etc., of what Kerr, his Irish agent, was doing at Avondale; or of some of his hobbies at home. So we would talk till daylight sent pale gleams of light under the window curtains, and he would say: "I am really sleepy, Queenie; I'll go to bed," and as a rule he would sleep soundly until about four o'clock in the afternoon, when he would come down to breakfast in my sitting-room.

Parnell was always generous in letting any members of his Party speak when they had a chance of distinguishing themselves, and he would at once give way when he thought any member could speak better on any subject than himself. This most of his Party, if not all, acknowledged at one time. I mention the characteristic because I have noticed in more than one of the so-called "Lives" written by those strangely ignorant of the man's real character, that considerable stress is laid upon Parnell's jealousy.

He was jealous, abnormally so where his affections were concerned, but not in political life.

Gladstone once said that "Parnell always knew what he wanted to say, and said it," but he was not a ready speaker, and his constitutional nervousness, hidden though it was under the iron mask of reserve he always wore in public, rendered public speaking very painful work to him. He was extremely modest about his own speeches, and frequently would say to me that So-and-so "would have put that much better to the House, but I could not have trusted him to say it, and leave it." He considered that most Irishmen spoilt things by over-elaboration. Here also I may record a protest at the tales of gross discourtesies, spoken utterly without motive, recorded in some of these "Lives."

The Parnell I knew—and I may claim to have known him more intimately than anyone else on earth, both in public and private life—was incapable of such motiveless brusqueries. That Parnell could crush utterly and without remorse I know; that he could deal harshly, even brutally, with anyone or anything that stood against him in the path he meant to tread, I admit; but that he would ever go out of his way to say a grossly rude thing or make an unprovoked attack, whether upon the personal appearance, morals, or character of another man, I absolutely deny. Parnell was ruthless in all his dealings with those who thwarted his will, but—he was never petty.

Parnell had a most beautiful and harmonious voice when speaking in public. Very clear it was, even in moments of passion against his own and his country's

foes—passion modulated and suppressed until I have seen, from the Ladies' Gallery, his hand clenched until the "Orders of the Day" which he held were crushed into pulp, and only that prevented his nails piercing his hand. Often I have taken the "Orders" out of his pocket, twisted into shreds—a fate that also overtook the slips of notes and the occasional quotations he had got me to look out for him.

Sometimes when he was going to speak I could not leave my aunt long enough to be sure of getting to the Ladies' Gallery in time to hear him; or we might think it inexpedient that I should be seen to arrive so soon after him at the House. On these occasions, when I was able, I would arrive perhaps in the middle of his speech and look down upon him, saying in my heart, "I have come!"; and invariably I would see the answering signal—the lift of the head and lingering touch of the white rose in his coat, which told me, "I know, my Queen!"

This telepathy of the soul, intuition, or what you will, was so strong between us that, whatever the business before the House, whether Parnell was speaking or not, in spite of the absolute impossibility of distinguishing any face or form behind the grille of the Ladies' Gallery, Parnell was aware of my presence, even though often he did not expect me, as soon as I came in, and answered my wordless message by the signal that I knew.

Sometimes he would wish to speak to me before I went home, and would signal by certain manipulations of his handkerchief to me to go and await him at Charing Cross, or another of our meeting-places,

and there he would come to me to tell me how things were going, or to chat for a few minutes, or get from me the replies to messages sent through me to Mr. Gladstone.

* * * * * * *

THE GROSVENOR HOTEL,
Wednesday morning, February 23, 1881.

MY DEAR MRS. O'SHEA,—I am just leaving for Paris, where I shall remain for a few days.

The Cork and other meetings will be postponed, as Coercion Bill will not be passed by Sunday.

Please write me as before, and send some addresses.—Yours always, C. S. P.

DOVER,
Wednesday, February 23, 1881.

MY DEAR MRS. O'SHEA,—Am just starting for Calais.

Kindly send on my portmanteau with my letters and other things in my room or in the wardrobe to me at Hotel Brighton, Rue de Rivoli, Paris.—Yours always, C. S. P.

February 25, 1881.

MY DEAREST KATIE,—I have just received your three letters, and am so delighted to read them hurriedly before sending you this line in time for post.

I never had the slightest doubt of my darling, and cannot imagine why she should think so.

Did not know I was going when leaving here, but was induced to leave by private information, the nature of which I will send you in my next.

Am not yet sure whether I shall return, but shall manage to see you in any case.—Yours, C.

PARIS,
Sunday, February 27, 1881.

Have received following telegram which do not understand :

"Motive actuating latest arrival worthy consideration—telegraph all right."

Please explain who is latest arrival.—Yours very truly,

C. S. P.

Have no letter from you to-day.

HOTEL BRIGHTON, 218 RUE DE RIVOLI, PARIS,
Sunday evening, February 27, 1881.

MY DEAR MRS. O'SHEA,—I cannot understand your telegram received to-day at all, although I have been thinking it over all the evening. I wired back as you appeared to request in it, "All right."

There was no letter for me from you at the usual address, so I enclose another, as I fear something may have gone wrong. You can write me freely in my own name under cover to this address: Thomas Adams and Co., Limited, 33 Rue d'Hauteville, Paris, and they will forward the letters safely to me.

I have been warned from Dublin that there is some plot on foot against us which has been originated by information received from Cork, and you will guess the original source.

I am expecting further information to-morrow in reference to it. I have received five letters in all from you since my arrival in Paris. Best not post your letters at Eltham.

I did not know when leaving you that I was going—my departure was influenced by information of reliable kind that my arrest was intended for passage in Clare speech, and that bail would be refused, and I should be left in jail until Habeas Corpus was suspended, when I could have been again arrested. I think, however, they have now abandoned this intention, but will make sure before I return.

This is my third letter to you since my arrival here.—Yours,

C. S. P.

HOTEL BRIGHTON, 218 RUE DE RIVOLI, PARIS,
Tuesday, March 1, 1881.

MY DEAREST LOVE,—To-day I have received your four letters, the earliest of which was written on Saturday. You

do not seem to have written on Friday, as there was nothing for me on Saturday or Sunday.

I propose returning to London on Thursday morning, leaving here Wednesday evening, but it is just possible I may not leave till Thursday morning, in which case I shall not be able to see my Katie until Friday.

If I return Thursday morning, my Queen may expect to see me about one o'clock.

Your letters make me both happy and sad, happy to hear from my own, but sad when I see how troubled you are.—Always yours,

CHARLES.

GLASGOW,
Tuesday, April 19, 1881.

DEAREST KATIE,—I send you authority for letters. They are in two forms, one authorising delivery to you, and the other to bearer.

To-night I leave by boat for Dublin, arriving to-morrow morning. I trust my own wifie has not permitted herself to be too unhappy, and that she has not been worried. I am writing with her own beautiful face before me, and have just kissed it.—Always your husband.

Please write me to Morrison's.

CHAPTER XX

HOBBIES AND A CHALLENGE

"Admire, exult—despise—laugh, weep—for here
There is much matter for all feeling; Man!
Thou Pendulum betwixt a smile and tear."

BYRON.

IN the early summer of 1881 my aunt had one of her old friends to stay with her, and I seized the opportunity of freedom to take my children to Brighton for a month, after settling the old ladies together. I had gone down before the children to take rooms for them, and was walking across Brighton Station when I was suddenly joined by a tall man whom I did not recognise for a moment until he said quietly, "Don't you know me?" It was Mr. Parnell, who had slipped into the train at Clapham Junction, knowing that I was going to Brighton, and who had cut off his beard with his pocket scissors in the train in order to avoid being recognised at Brighton. He had wrapped a white muffler round his throat, and pulled it as high as possible over the lower part of his face, with the result that the manageress of the hotel he stayed at was certain that he had an infectious illness of the throat, and rather demurred at letting him in. It was only by the expedient of complaining loudly at being kept waiting in the draught with his "raging toothache" that "Mr. Stewart" was reluctantly admitted. I could not bear his appearance—

neither bearded nor shaven—so he went off soon after arrival, was properly shaved, and relieved the hotel staff by discarding the muffler and assuring them that he was free from pain now his " tooth " was out.

He went to Cork soon after this and, to please me, was photographed without the beard and with the ring I had given him on his finger. We had had a little quarrel, and were very unhappy until we had made it up again, and he had this photograph done to remind me that he wore my ring. He also gave sittings to Henry O'Shea (no relation of Captain O'Shea) for a portrait (pencil) at this time, and this was sent to him while he was in Kilmainham. He liked this sketch much, and wrote to the paper for which it was done to this effect. When he left the prison he brought the sketch home to me, and I have it now. It hung in our dining-room till he died, and he always liked it, but I still think it a little hard and expressionless; the eyes are too large and empty. There was a painting done of Parnell years afterwards, and here also the artist failed with the eyes. This latter portrait was not, I think, done from life, but from photographs, so there was reason for the failure in this respect, photographs making unsatisfactory studies. The artist who painted this last picture gave Parnell blue eyes; presumably following the idea that Parnell was an Irishman, and must therefore have blue eyes, whereas the facts were that Parnell was not an Irishman, but the son of an Englishman resident in Ireland and his American wife, and had brown eyes, not large, but with the smouldering fires in them that gave character to his cold, high-bred face.



MR. PARNELL IN 1881

A photograph taken for Mrs. Parnell after his beard had been cut

Parnell had so many hobbies and interests in his home life that it is difficult to enumerate them all. He once said rather wearily that if he had not "taken off his coat" in the Irish cause and for the Irish people he could have been always happy at home working at things so much more congenial to him.

At one time he took up all the intricacies of book-keeping in order that he might check his Irish agent's accounts, and many weeks he sat immersed in double entry, estate accounts keeping, commercial booking, etc., in the evening, while I sat near him typing replies to his letters ready for his signature. He used to threaten me with lessons in book-keeping, so that I might be ready to help him with the estate management at Avondale when we went to live there; but I felt that my duties as his extra and most private secretary were sufficiently arduous, and declined instruction in account-keeping.

Many hours were also spent in architectural drawings, which interested him greatly. At that time Brighton Station was being rebuilt, and Parnell was intensely interested in getting the "span" of the roof. He spent hours at odd times pacing the station, measuring distances, heights, depth of roof, etc. etc., and in drawing up plans in order that he might build a cattle shed on the same lines at Avondale. These plans he afterwards submitted to a well-known architect for his opinion on them, and they were returned as absolutely correct in every detail. He then reduced the whole thing to scale and had the cattle shed made from these plans at Avondale.

I well remember his look of reproach at me when

I laughed while reading him a letter from his agent at Avondale the following winter. The agent said that Mrs. Delia Parnell (Parnell's mother) had arrived unexpectedly at Avondale, and, after seeing the new cattle shed, had at once decided to give an entertainment in it. This she had done, having the cattle shifted from their comfortable quarters, the place boarded in, and a temporary floor laid down.

Parnell did not see that this expensive and troublesome eviction of his cattle for so frivolous a reason was in the least funny, and was very greatly annoyed at the whole proceeding He was always most chivalrously kind to his mother, however, and his protest on this occasion was very gentle, though coupled with firm insistence, on the instant restoration of the cattle-house to its tenants.

Another of his hobbies was the "assaying" of small pieces of quartz from the stream at Wicklow, and I used to help him for hours at this, keeping his blow-pipe constantly at work, while he, silent and absorbed, manipulated the crucibles. When we went to live at Brighton, after my aunt's death, he had a furnace fitted up in one of the rooms so that he could work on a larger scale. His endeavour to obtain gold from this quartz was rewarded to a certain extent; but the working was, of course, far too laborious and expensive to be profitable otherwise than as a hobby. However, Parnell for five years worked at it in various odd hours till he had extracted sufficient gold to line my wedding ring, even though his hope of getting enough for the whole ring was not fulfilled.

When working at these things Parnell was abso-

lutely oblivious to the passing of time, and it was with difficulty that I prevailed upon him to take sufficient exercise, or even to take his meals before they were spoiled by waiting. He would order his horse, "President," to be taken to a certain place about a half-mile from the house, at the hour he wished to ride, and then become so absorbed in the particular hobby of the moment that even I could get nothing from him but an abstracted smile and a gentle "Is that so?" in answer to the intimation that his horse had been waiting some two hours or more for him.

Many a day I have let him work up to the last possible moment, and then literally pulled off the old "cardigan" jacket he worked in, and forced him into his frock-coat for the House; and it happened more than once that he was due to attend a meeting in Ireland, and when I had packed his things and had the carriage at the door ready for him he would throw himself into a chair and with his slow, grave smile say, "You are in a hurry to get rid of me; I will not go yet. Sit down and let me look at you a bit, my Queen." I would protest that he *must* go, that he would lose the mail train. "Then I'll be no use at the meeting, for it will be over!" he would mockingly reply; and so, when the last possible chance of his being in time had vanished, he would sit opposite me through the evening talking of politics, Avondale, the assaying—of anything that came into his head—always watching me with that intent, considering gaze that was my bewilderment and my joy.

When he failed a meeting like this, where hundreds of people were waiting for him—or other appoint-

ments, private or public—I sometimes would want him to telegraph, or write, apologising or excusing his non-attendance, but this he would never do, saying, "You do not learn the ethics of kingship, Queenie. Never explain, never apologise"; adding, with his rare laugh: "I could never keep my rabble together if I were not above the human weakness of apology."

When Parnell came home from Ireland after these meetings he would sit smoking and watching me as I went through the pockets of the coats he had worn while away. It was a most interesting game, and he enjoyed it as much as I when I brought out a new trophy from the depths of the deepest and most obvious side-pocket. It was a point of honour that he should not "feel or look" till he got home to me, and I have a dear little collection of souvenirs now from these pockets—little medals with the images of various saints, scapulars and badges, slipped in by the deft, modest fingers of sweet-faced nuns, in the crowds, whose startled, deprecating blushes when he turned and caught the delinquent in the act always won a courteous bow and smile from the heretic "Chief" whose conversion their patriotic hearts so ardently desired. I found also odds and ends pressed upon him by the hero-worshipping peasants, some gruesome scrap of the rope that had hanged some unknown scamp and hero, so "aising to the bone-pains, an' his riv'rance not looking, a bit of a twisht roun' yer honour's arrm!" or perhaps a flattened old bullet that had gained some fancied power in its evil journey through a man's heart. Then there were the brand-new kerchiefs of most vivid green, most beau-

tifully embroidered by the clever fingers of " her self," and so many four-leaved, and therefore " lucky," shamrocks from the " colleens," who went singing all the year if they thereby earned a smile from the Chief. Even the little children used to make sudden, shy offerings to their hero; a " quare bit ave a stone," a " farden me mither giv me," or some uneasy looking fragment of what might once have been a bird's egg. Of sticks, blackthorns and others, I once had an enormous collection brought back to me at various times by Parnell, but these, together with the two riding-whips I had myself given him, were stolen from me some ten years ago, when I was moving from one house to another. The two riding-whips I prized very highly, for Parnell was so pleased when I gave them to him. One was gold-mounted, the other silver-mounted, and each had " C.S.P." engraved upon it.

Among my stick collection was one made of horn —a curious thing, carved and inlaid with ivory, sent him by some unknown American admirer. He used this stick on his last journey upstairs from the sitting-room to the bed where he died.

In January of 1881, Willie, who had rooms then in Charles Street, Haymarket, came down to Eltham suddenly, very angry indeed with me because he had seen some men watching his lodgings, and imagined that I had engaged a detective to do so. As I had never had an idea of doing anything of the sort I was extremely annoyed, and a violent quarrel was the result. As a matter of fact the men were watching the upper floor, where a

friend of Willie's lived, and this friend's wife afterwards divorced him.

All these months, since my first meeting with Mr. Parnell, Willie knew at least that I frequently met him at the House. He had invited him to Eltham himself, though when the visit was first proposed I said my house was too shabby, the children would worry so nervous a man, and we had better not break the routine of our (Willie's and my) life (which by then was tacitly accepted as a formal separation of a friendly sort), giving any and every excuse, because of the danger I knew I was not able to withstand.

But Willie was blind to the existence of the fierce, bewildering force that was rising within me in answer to the call of those passion-haunted eyes, that waking or sleeping never left me. Willie then, as always, was content that what was his, was *his* for good or ill. He knew that men, in our past life together, had admired me, even that some had loved me; but that was to their own undoing, an impertinence that had very properly recoiled upon their own heads. *His* wife could not love anyone but himself; perhaps unfortunately she did not even do that, but after all "love" was only a relative term—a little vulgar even, after girlhood had passed, and the mild affection of his own feelings towards her were no doubt reciprocated, in spite of the unfortunate temperamental differences that made constant companionship impossible.

So Parnell came, having in his gentle, insistent way urged his invitation, and from Willie. And now

Willie and I were quarrelling because he, my lawful husband, had come down without the invitation that was now (for some years) understood as due to the courtesy of friends, and because he had become vaguely suspicious. Flying rumours had perhaps reached his ears; and now it was too late, for he dared not formulate them, they were too vague; too late, for I had been swept into the avalanche of Parnell's love; too late, for I possessed the husband of my heart for all eternity.

I had fought against our love; but Parnell would not fight, and I was alone. I had urged my children and his work; but he answered me: "For good or ill, I am your husband, your lover, your children, your all. And I will give my life to Ireland, but to you I give my love, whether it be your heaven or your hell. It is destiny. When I first looked into your eyes I knew."

When Willie arrived so suddenly at Eltham Mr. Parnell was not there, but Willie went into his room, and finding his portmanteau, sent it to London, and left my house, declaring he would challenge Parnell to fight a duel and would shoot him.

"My dear Mrs. O'Shea," wrote Parnell from London on the 7th of January, "will you kindly ask Captain O'Shea where he left my luggage? I inquired at both parcel office, cloak-room, and this hotel at Charing Cross to-day, and they were not to be found."

Willie later challenged Parnell, sending The O'Gorman Mahon to him as his second; but the duel was not fought. My sister, Mrs. Steele, came down to

see me, and patched up a peace between myself and Willie; and Mr. Parnell, while making arrangements to go abroad to meet Willie, explained to him that he (Parnell) must have a medium of communication between the Government and himself, that Mrs. O'Shea had kindly undertaken the office for him, and, as this would render negotiations possible and safe, he trusted that Willie would make no objection to his meeting her after the duel.

"I replied to Captain O'Shea's note yesterday," writes Parnell, "and sent my reply by a careful messenger to the Salisbury Club; and it must be waiting him there.

"He has just written me a very insulting letter, and I shall be obliged to send a friend to him if I do not have a satisfactory reply to a second note I have just sent him."

Willie then thought he had been too hasty in his action, and, knowing I had become immersed in the Irish cause, merely made the condition that Mr. Parnell should not stay at Eltham.

From the date of this bitter quarrel Parnell and I were one, without further scruple, without fear, and without remorse.

The following are "cypher" letters of private messages to me bearing upon the matter of the threatened duel:—

July 20, 1881.

MY DEAR MRS. O'SHEA,—Just a line to say that I am very well and wondering when I shall see you again.

I hope that your cold is better.—Yours very truly,

CHAS. S. PARNELL.

House of Commons,
Thursday night, July 22, 1881.

My dear Mrs. O'Shea,—I have received both your very kind letters quite safely, and am looking forward to seeing you somewhere or somehow to-morrow.

I am very much troubled at everything you have to undergo, and trust that it will not last long.—Yours always,

Chas. S. Parnell.

I am still quite well. Thank you very much for enclosure.

Westminster Palace Hotel,
Victoria Street, London, S.W.,
Sunday evening, July 25, 1881.

My dear Mrs. O'Shea,—I write to ask you to send my travelling cap, if it is at Eltham, to me here, as I may have to go over to Paris or Boulogne some day this week.

I hope your eyes are quite well again and that you are enjoying these cool times.

I have been very lonely all to-day and yesterday. Have not seen anyone that I know.—Yours always,

Chas. S. Parnell.

July 26, 1881.

My dear Mrs. O'Shea,—I am still staying at the same address, and have postponed going to France, so you need not send my cap.—Yours always, Chas. S. Parnell.

CHAPTER XXI

ASTRONOMY AND "SEDITION"

"—and there is one stirring hour . . . when a wakeful influence goes abroad over the sleeping hemisphere. . . . Do the stars rain down an influence?"

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON.

DURING his leisure moments at Eltham Mr. Parnell took up the study of astronomy with the vigour that always characterised him when he was interested in a subject. He had picked out from my bookshelf a book of stars—one of Sir Robert Ball's, I believe, that I had bought at random one day, and became at once interested. From the teaching of an old friend of my father's I had a fairly good knowledge of astronomy, and, though by no means well up in the latest research and discoveries, I was able to tell him much of the stellar systems that was new to him. Finding how he devoured the little book of Sir Robert Ball's, I got several of the latter's interesting works for him, besides Herschel's.

Then Mr. Parnell told me of a magnificent telescope he had at Avondale, and sent for it. When this arrived he sent for a few sacks of Portland cement, with which he made a pedestal in my garden, and himself mounted the telescope upon it. He made an ingenious arrangement whereby the slightest touch would tilt the telescope to the desired angle, and we

spent many nights, he and I, watching the stars and following the courses of the planets till they faded in the dawn. Then he thought of how near to us was the Observatory at Greenwich, and got a permit to go over the Observatory. After that, on the days when my aunt had her readers with her, I used to accompany him to the Observatory, where we spent many hours.

He could always absorb very quickly any knowledge that appealed to him, and he soon had the pleasure of teaching me much about the latest discoveries, and about a subject intensely interesting to him—the wonderful way in which the telescopes used in the great observatories of the world are made.

In time this study of the stars began to worry him too much, and he reluctantly gave up all serious work on the subject. He said it was all too immense and absorbing to think about in a life that was primarily concerned with politics. But the pedestal remained, and still we occasionally mounted the telescope and kept vigil with the stars through the summer night.

On April 7th, 1881, Mr. Gladstone had introduced his Land Bill into the House of Commons. It was a better Bill than the Irish Party had reason to expect, but it had grave defects, and the Irish had not been consulted; while the Government's policy of coercion and Forster's attitude towards Parnell and his followers made co-operation between the Liberals and the Irish impossible. Parnell's policy was to hold aloof and press for amendments. After being

crippled in the House of Lords the Bill became law. At a Land League Convention held in Dublin on September 14th a resolution was adopted, on the suggestion of Parnell, that the Act should be tested by selected cases. "Nothing," said Parnell, "could be more disastrous to our cause or our organisation, and to your hopes of getting your rents reduced, than an indiscriminate rush of the tenantry into the Land Courts."

A few days later Parnell was drawn in triumph through the streets of Dublin. The same day Forster wrote to Gladstone suggesting that Parnell should be arrested under the Coercion Act.

He suggested, moreover, that in his next speech at Leeds, on October 7th, Mr. Gladstone should impeach Parnell and his policy. Gladstone obeyed. The people of Ireland, he cried, wished to use the Land Act and Parnell would not let them, but "the resources of civilisation were not yet exhausted."

Parnell retorted with passion and scorn in his famous Wexford speech delivered on October 9th.

"You have," he said, "gained something by your exertions during the last twelve months, but I am here to-day to tell you that you have gained but a fraction of that to which you are justly entitled. And the Irishman who thinks that he can now throw away his arms, just as Grattan disbanded the volunteers in 1782, will find to his sorrow and destruction, when too late, that he has placed himself in the power of a perfidious, cruel, unrelenting English enemy.

"It is a good sign that this masquerading knight-errant, this pretended champion of the liberties of

every other nation except those of the Irish nation, should be obliged to throw off the mask to-day and to stand revealed as the man who, by his own utterances, is prepared to carry fire and sword into your homesteads unless you humble and abase yourselves before him and before the landlords of this country. But I have forgotten. I had said that he had maligned everybody. Oh, no; he has a good word for one or two people. He says that the late Mr. Isaac Butt was a most amiable man and a true patriot. In the opinion of an English statesman no man is good in Ireland until he is buried and unable to strike a blow for Ireland, and perhaps the day may come when I may get a good word from English statesmen as a moderate man when I am dead and buried.

"When people talk of public plunder they should first ask themselves and recall to mind who were the first public plunderers in Ireland. The land of Ireland has been confiscated three times over by the men whose descendants Mr. Gladstone is supporting in the fruits of their plunder by his bayonets and buckshot. Oh, yes; but we can say a little more than that too; we can say, or at all events if we don't say it others will say it, that the doctrine of public plunder is only a question of degree. Who was it that first sanctioned this doctrine of public plunder? will be asked by some persons. I am proceeding in the demand that the improvements of the tenants—and their predecessors in title—shall be theirs, no matter how long ago they may have been made. I am proceeding upon the lines of an amendment in the Land Act of 1881, which was introduced by Mr. Healy,

framed by Mr. Gladstone's Attorney-General for Ireland, and sanctioned by Mr. Gladstone, his whole Cabinet, the House of Commons, and the House of Lords, and I say that it is a question of degree if you extend that limit of twenty years, within which period the improvements of the tenants have been protected by the legislature, to that period, no matter how long, within which those improvements have been made.

"So that if we are to go into this question the utmost that Mr. Gladstone and the Liberal Party will be able to make out of it will be to find that there are some persons very much better entitled to call him a little robber than he is to call me a big one. But I was forgetting a point; he has a good word for Mr. Shaw. He has discovered that there are only four or five honest Irishmen in the country, and one of these is Mr. Shaw. He blames me for not having disapproved of what he calls the dynamite policy. Well, I am not aware that Mr. Shaw has repudiated the dynamite policy either; but I'll tell you what Mr. Shaw said, and you must bear in mind that, in addition to speaking well of him as an honest Irishman, Mr. Gladstone also offered him a situation as one of the Land Commissioners. Mr. Shaw did not repudiate the dynamite policy any more than I did; but I'll tell you what he did eighteen months ago in the county of Cork. He said that his blood boiled whenever he saw a process-server, and that he never met one without feeling inclined to take the linchpin out of his car. Now, gentlemen, if I said that to you to-day Mr. Gladstone would have me in Kilmainham before three weeks were out. Nay, more, if I had

ever spoken anything like that Mr. Gladstone would have had me in Kilmainham long ago.

* * * * * *

"In one last despairing wail he says that when the Government is expected to preserve the peace it has no moral force behind it. The Government has no moral force behind it in Ireland. The whole Irish people are against them. They have to depend for their support on the self-interest of a very small minority of the people of this country, and therefore they have no moral force behind them.

"Mr. Gladstone, in those few short words, admits that the English Government has failed in Ireland; he admits the contention that Grattan and the volunteers of '82 fought for; he admits the contention that the men of '98 lost their lives for; he admits the contention that O'Connell argued for; he admits the contention that the men of '48 staked their all for; he admits the contention that the men of '65, after a long period of depression and of apparent death of all national life, in Ireland, cheerfully faced the dungeon and the horrors of penal servitude for, and admits the contention that to-day you in your over-powering multitudes have re-established, and, please God, will bring to a successful and final issue, namely, that England's mission in Ireland has been a failure, and that Irishmen have established their right to govern Ireland by laws made by themselves for themselves on Irish soil.

"I say it is not in his power to trample on the aspirations and the rights of the Irish people with no moral force behind him. These are very brave

words that he uses, but it strikes me that they have a ring about them like the whistle of a schoolboy on his way through a churchyard at night to keep up his courage. He would have you to believe that he is not afraid of you because he has disarmed you, because he has attempted to disorganise you, because he knows that the Irish nation is to-day disarmed, so far as physical weapons go. But he does not hold this kind of language with the Boers. . . ."

* * * * * *

"Suppose they arrest you, Mr. Parnell," asked an Irish member, who dined with the Leader on the evening of the speech, "have you any instructions to give us? Who will take your place?" "Ah!" he said, deliberately, looking through a glass of champagne which he had just raised to his lips. "Ah, if I am arrested Captain Moonlight will take my place." *

All through 1881 Parnell was constantly paying flying visits to Ireland, and also to various parts of England, working up the "League," addressing meetings and privately ascertaining for himself how far the temper of the "reactionaries" could be trusted to do the work he wished without becoming too greatly involved in the tactics of the "Invincibles" proper. He came home to me now always between the times of his journeyings up and down the country, and if it was not certain that I should be alone he would write me a formal though friendly note or letter that anyone could have been shown, in which was given some word or sign that let me know a place or time of meeting him, either in London or nearer my home.

* "The Life of Parnell," by Barry O'Brien.

On some of these occasions my duties to my aunt would keep me, so that I might be an hour or more late in arriving at the place where he awaited me; but never once in all those years did he once fail me or leave the place of appointment before I came, even though it might be at the loss of the mail train to Ireland, and leaving some thousands of people waiting in vain for the speech he was too far away to make. Sometimes I would become conscience-stricken on such an occasion, but he would only comment that one speech more or less was a little matter, and what was lost by a speech not made was amply compensated for by the deepened impression of his mystery and power gained by the people. "For it is the strange thing I found out early in political life," he would say, "they think I'm much more wonderful when I do nothing than when I'm working hard."

Saturday evening, August 1, 1881.

My dear Mrs. O'Shea,—I had arranged to go to a meeting at Durham to-day, but was unable to do so at the last moment.

I think you have some books of mine at Eltham, which I propose going down to look for on Monday, about eleven or twelve, unless I hear from you that you can find them for me.—Yours very truly, Chas. S. Parnell.

Please reply to House of Commons, where I shall call for my letters on Monday morning.

August 17, 1881.

I have been rendered very anxious by not receiving any news from you to-day, and trust that nothing has happened to you, and that you are not ill.

I had a very satisfactory conversation yesterday, and things look much straighter.—Yours truly, C.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,
August 19, 1881.

I arrived home quite right, and am very much pleased to learn this evening that you have good hopes.—Yours always,

C.

MORRISON'S HOTEL, DUBLIN,
September 10, 1881.

MY DEAR MRS. O'SHEA,—Will you kindly address and post enclosed.

I am quite recovered from my attack, and the doctor says that I shall be able to travel in a few days.—Yours very truly,

CHAS. S. PARNELL.

The enclosure was the following letter:—

MORRISON'S HOTEL, DUBLIN,
September 10, 1881.

MY OWN WIFIE,—I know that you must have been much worried yesterday by my failure to send you a few words, but my Beauty will forgive her own husband.

Your wire has been put into my hand as I write, and shall have an instant answer.

It gives me so much pleasure to know that your trouble has not returned since I left, and that my wires give you pleasure. Your King thinks very very often of his dearest Queen, and wishes her not to be sad, but to try and be happy for his sake. Everything is going on very well here, and your King is much satisfied.

MORRISON'S HOTEL, DUBLIN,
September 25, 1881.

MY OWN LOVELIEST,—I send you these few words to assure Wifie that her husband always thinks of her and hopes that she is well and happy.

YOUR OWN KING.

October 4, 1881.

MY OWN WIFIE,—I have satisfied myself, by two separate tests to-day, that there is a good deal of silver in the dark stone of which there is so much in the old mine. In fact nearly the whole lode consists of this (the miners are working in it in the North Level). I cannot say how many ounces there will be to the ton until I get it assayed, but if there should be six or eight ounces to the ton it ought to pay to work.

YOUR OWN KING.

MORRISON'S HOTEL, DUBLIN,
October 7, 1881.

MY OWN WIFIE,—I called to-day to see him* on my return from Dungarvan, but he was out, and I waited for him three hours. Calling again at eleven to-night, he was again out, but returned just as I was writing to make an appointment for the morning. He *says* that he leaves to-morrow (Friday) evening, and stops to shoot on Saturday in Wales, and goes on Tuesday to Paris to see the Papal Nuncio, who he says has requested him to come. This, then, is the last letter I can send you for the present through Eltham, so I hope to have the other address from you to-morrow morning.

My dearest Katie must have been very lonely ever since. Did she get my three letters? Her husband has been so busy he has not even had time to sleep, but he has never been too busy to think of her.

I can go over to London early next week if I may see you. Should I remain in London or go down to you?

With numerous kisses to my beautiful Queenie.

C. S. P.

October 8, 1881.

MY DEAREST LITTLE WIFIE,—Your husband has been very good since he left you, and is longing to see you again. He has kept his eyes, thought, and love all for you, and my sweetest love may be assured that he always will.

To-morrow I go to Avondale, thence to Wexford on Sun-

* Captain O'Shea.

day, whence I return Monday morning and hope to be with my Queenie on Tuesday or Wednesday at latest.

Everything in Dublin has been settled up pretty satisfactorily, and I trust only to have to make an occasional appearance in Ireland during the rest of the autumn and winter.

ALWAYS YOUR KING.

On October 11th, Forster crossed to England, having first arranged with Sir Thomas Steele, Commander-in-Chief in Ireland, that, should the Cabinet agree to arrest Parnell, Forster would wire the one word "Proceed."

The same day Parnell returned to Avondale, and on the next night was back in Dublin.

MORRISON'S HOTEL,
October 11, 1881.

MY OWN KATIE,—I found two letters and two wires from your King's Queen here on my arrival an hour ago. Your telegram this morning took a great weight off my mind, as your silence made me almost panic-stricken lest you had been hurt by that —— and had not been able to get to town.

To-morrow I go to Kildare,* and shall try and start for London Friday morning; but I cannot be sure of this, as "something"† may turn up at the last moment, and there is also a meeting of the Executive on Saturday, which they want me to stay for.

However, Wifie knows I will do the best I can, and she will get a wire from me on Friday, soon after or as soon as she receives this, telling her what I have done. If I arrive London Friday night shall go to same hotel and shall wait for my darling.

Will she mind asking for my number?

ALWAYS YOUR OWN KING.

* He was to have addressed a meeting at Naas.

† Possibility of arrest.

CHAPTER XXII

THE ARREST OF PARNELL

"*Beyond the hills, beyond the sea,*
O Love, my love, come back to me,
And bring me back yon summer's day."

LADY LINDSAY.

ON October 12th, 1881, I was in London on Mr. Parnell's business—to ascertain the movements of the Government. He, of course, was in Ireland and had warned me that it would be impossible for him to keep out of prison much longer, and that any further effort to avoid arrest would be inexpedient on all counts. I was much depressed about this and urged him to put it off as long as possible.

My health was then delicate, and I felt an unreasonable fear and loneliness when he was away from me. He was very tender and considerate to me, but pointed out that the turmoil and rebellion he had brought to a head in Ireland must be very carefully handled to be productive of ultimate good, and that he could "mark time" with the Land League better in Kilmainham than out, thus rendering this force more useful to the Home Rule campaign and less wanton in destruction. Parnell used, but never abused, the weapons of political strife he forged.

He desired immediate information of the decision of the Government to arrest him, that he might destroy

any papers that, found on him, might frustrate his plans and cause unnecessary difficulty to those working with him. So when on October 12th information was sent to me, at the house where I waited in London in the neighbourhood of Piccadilly, that a Cabinet Council had been hurriedly summoned, I wired in code to Parnell and directly after the Cabinet Council I was able to inform him that Forster had left for Ireland with the warrant for his arrest.

I could not bear the thought of his arrest, and after writing to him under cover to a person in Ireland who would, I knew, get my letter to him, whether in or out of prison, I telegraphed to Parnell again to know if he could meet me at Holyhead if I started at once. I had so much of his business in hand now, and he had expected to see me at least once more before the inevitable separation of his imprisonment. I felt almost unable to cope with the situation; I was not strong and I was full of anxiety as to the probable effects upon Parnell's health of life in Kilmainham Gaol. In addition to my anxiety, the deception I had to practise towards Captain O'Shea, seldom as I saw him, told upon my nerves just now. However, Parnell's message in reply, written in our private code, reassured me. While he still thought it better to suffer arrest at once, he would not go out of his way to meet it, and would be careful when in Kilmainham so that his imprisonment should be of short duration. He would not allow me to go to the fatigue of a journey to Holyhead, nor would he go abroad to avoid arrest, and I went home comforting myself as I could with his confident spirit and loving messages.

On October 13th there was a terrible gale throughout the South of England, and at Eltham, after a sleepless night, I was up early—far too early to disturb my old aunt—and wandered out through her park in the gale. The battling with the wind lifted a little the load of restlessness and anxiety as to what was happening in Ireland from my heart. The fierce wind blowing through my hair braced me and cleared the "cobwebs" from my brain, and, leaning against a tree for support, I watched the havoc of the storm as the crimson and russet leaves were swirled across the park from the rookery, rising in places like waterspouts into the air as they met the opposing current of wind in the open. The old trees bowed beneath the gale as though at last the weight of years was too much for them, and a warning crash from the one against which I leant made me stagger breathless into the wind again, as a large branch was torn from it close to the place where I had stood. In the slow-breaking day I fought my way as far as the old house, and holding on to the railings that separated the lawns from the park I turned to look down the long elm avenue. I was a little frightened at the force of the gale, which now seemed to be screaming around me, and as I looked towards the avenue, where leaves and small branches were flying before the wind, there was a terrific crash and the whole of one side of the avenue fell, ripping and tearing till I thought every tree in the place was coming down. Heavy with foliage, these old trees had given in to the fury of the storm, and the falling of one upon another with all the weight of their huge branches had completed the ruin.

I was with my aunt as usual all that day, and was glad of the quiet and rest. The old lady gazed out at the still raging storm and told me tales of her youth, while I listened to the voice I loved in the wind outside, saying to me again and again what he had said before he left me, "Be brave, Queenie. I cannot stay outside while all these others are arrested, and it is bound to be soon now."

Towards evening, when the storm had cleared a little, and my aunt had fallen asleep before the fire, I went home to get the evening papers I always had sent over from Blackheath before Willie came down from London to dinner, as he had written to say he would do. However, on my return home I found Willie already there, extremely pleased to be able to announce to me that Parnell had been arrested that morning. I knew his news directly I saw his face, and as I was really prepared for it I did not flinch, but replied languidly that I had thought Parnell "couldn't keep out of gaol much longer, didn't you?"

But Willie was so fiercely and openly joyful that my maids, who were ardent Parnellites, were much shocked, and I, being terribly overwrought, laughed at their disgusted faces as I went to dress for dinner. It was really the laugh of tears, but that laugh of jangled nerves and misery did me good service with Willie, and we got through dinner amicably enough, while he descanted upon the wickedness and folly of Parnell's policy and the way the Irish question should really be settled, and would be if it could be left in his hands and those who thought with him. He observed me closely, as he criticised Parnell and his policy,

and reiterated his pleasure in knowing he was "laid by the heels."

I was now quite calm again, and smiled at him as I reminded him that I was now as ardent a Parnellite as Parnell himself, and had already done so much hard work for "the cause" that my politics were far more reactionary than when he had introduced Parnell to me: unlike his (Willie's) own, which were less so. My heart being in Kilmainham Gaol with my lover, I was momentarily at peace, and could ask Willie questions as to the mode of life and prison discipline of political prisoners. Willie, as are so many men, was never so happy as when giving information.

The next day I received my King's letter, written as he was arrested:—

MORRISON'S HOTEL, DUBLIN,
October 13, 1881.

MY OWN QUEENIE,—I have just been arrested by two fine-looking detectives, and write these words to wifie to tell her that she must be a brave little woman and not fret after her husband.

The only thing that makes me worried and unhappy is that it may hurt you and our child.

You know, darling, that on this account it will be wicked of you to grieve, as I can never have any other wife but you, and if anything happens to you I must die childless. Be good and brave, dear little wifie, then. YOUR OWN HUSBAND.

Politically it is a fortunate thing for me that I have been arrested, as the movement is breaking fast, and all will be quiet in a few months, when I shall be released.

Speaking at the Guildhall on the day of Parnell's arrest Mr. Gladstone said: "Within these few minutes

I have been informed that towards the vindication of the law, of order, of the rights of property, and the freedom of the land, of the first elements of political life and civilisation, the first step has been taken in the arrest of the man who has made himself pre-eminent in the attempt to destroy the authority of the law, and substitute what would end in being nothing more than anarchical oppression exercised upon the people of Ireland."

When he uttered the word "arrest" he was stopped by the audience rising en masse and cheering frantically. "Parnell's arrest"—I quote from the "Life of Forster"—"was hailed almost as though it had been the news of a signal victory gained by England over a hated and formidable enemy."

Sexton, O'Kelly, Dillon, O'Brien, and J. P. Quinn, secretary of the League, were quickly arrested, while warrants were issued for Biggar, Healy, and Arthur O'Connor. Healy was in England, and Biggar and O'Connor managed to join him there.

CHAPTER XXIII

KILMAINHAM DAYS

"Love is not a flower that grows on the dull earth;
Springs by the calendar; must wait for the sun.
. . . . . .
E'en while you look the peerless flower is up
Consummate in the birth."—J. S. KNOWLES.

AT the news of the arrest a wave of indignation swept through Ireland. In Dublin there were riots. In many places shops were closed and towns and villages went into mourning as if for the death of a king.

Five days later the Land League countered the arrest by issuing the No Rent manifesto.

Parnell was really opposed to it, Dillon openly so, but the majority of the leaders then in Kilmainham Gaol approved of it, and it was signed and published in *United Ireland* on October 17th. The signature is interesting, it runs thus:—

"Charles S. Parnell, President, Kilmainham Gaol;
A. J. Kettle, Honorary Secretary, Kilmainham Gaol;
Michael Davitt, Honorary Secretary, Portland Prison;
Thomas Brennan, Honorary Secretary, Kilmainham Gaol;
Thomas Geston, Head Organiser, Kilmainham Gaol;
Patrick Egan, Treasurer, Paris."

Meanwhile arrests and evictions went on all over

Ireland, and the Coercion Act was used mercilessly and unscrupulously on behalf of the landlords. The Ladies' Land League and its president, Miss Anna Parnell, became very busy.

* * * * * *

From the time of Parnell's arrest onward until the birth of his child in the following February I lived a curiously subconscious existence; pursuing the usual routine of my life at home and with my aunt, but feeling that all that was of life in me had gone with my lover to prison, and only came back to me in the letters that were my only mark of time. I had to be careful now; Willie became solicitous for my health, and wished to come to Eltham more frequently than I would allow. He thought February would seal our reconciliation, whereas I knew it would cement the cold hatred I felt towards him, and consummate the love I bore my child's father.

October 14, 1881.

My own dearest Wifie,—I have found a means of communicating with you, and of your communicating in return.

Please put your letters into enclosed envelope, first putting them into an inner envelope, on the joining of which you can write your initials with a similar pencil to mine, and they will reach me all right.

I am very comfortable here, and have a beautiful room facing the sun—the best in the prison. There are three or four of the best of the men in adjoining rooms with whom I can associate all day long, so that time does not hang heavy nor do I feel lonely. My only fear is about my darling Queenie. I have been racked with torture all to-day, last night, and yesterday, lest the shock may have hurt you or our child.

Oh, darling, write or wire me as soon as you get this that you are well and will try not to be unhappy until you see your husband again. You may wire me here.

I have your beautiful face with me here; it is such a comfort. I kiss it every morning. YOUR KING.

KILMAINHAM,
October 17, 1881.

MY DEAR MRS. O'SHEA,—I was very much pleased to receive your two letters, which reached me safely after having been duly perused by the Governor. I am also writing to Captain O'Shea's Paris address to acknowledge his.

The last letter which you directed to Morrison's also reached me.

If you have not done so already, please inquire in London about the messages you were expecting, and about any others that may arrive in future, and let me know in your next whether you have received them.

This prison is not at all damp, although the air on the north side is rather so, but I am on the south side, and am so far exceedingly comfortable and not in the slightest degree dull. We are allowed to play ball, and you will be glad to hear that I won my first game against one of the best and most practised players in the place, although I have not played for twenty years.

I have received the *Times*, *Engineer*, *Engineering*, *Mining Journal*, *Pall Mall Gazette*, *Universe*, from a London office, also the *Engineer* directed in your handwriting.

Shall be delighted to hear from you as often as you care to write.—Yours always, C. S. P.

When you write again please let me know how you are. I have been very anxious for news on that point.

October 19, 1881.

MY OWN DARLING QUEENIE,—I have just received your charming little letter of Tuesday, which I have been anxiously expecting for the last week. It has taken an enormous load

off my mind. I shall send you a long letter to-morrow or next day, but for the present you had better not come over, as there are five or six other men in rooms adjacent to mine who find out about everybody who visits me. Besides, you would not be permitted to see me except in presence of two warders, and it might only make you more unhappy.

You must not be alarmed about rumours that the Government have evidence that we are involved in a treasonable conspiracy. There is absolutely no foundation whatever for such a statement, and it is only made to defend their own proceedings.

Dearest little Queenie, keep up your spirits. I am very comfortable and very well, and expect to see my darling before the New Year.

Don't put my name in inner envelope in future, as if opened it might implicate others.

October 21, 1881.

My own darling Wifie,—I wrote you a short note this afternoon, which I succeeded in getting off safely. Now after we have been all locked up safely for the night, and when everything is quiet and I am alone, I am going to send my own Queenie some news. But first I must tell you that I sleep exceedingly well, and am allowed to read the newspapers in bed in the morning, and breakfast there also, if I wish.

I want, however, to give you a little history from the commencement of my stay here.

When I heard that the detectives were asking for me a terror—one which has often been present with me in anticipation—fell upon me, for I remembered that my darling had told me that she feared it would kill her; and I kept the men out of my room while I was writing you a few hasty words of comfort and of hope, for I knew the shock would be very terrible to my sweet love.

I feared that I could not post it, but they stopped the cab just before reaching the prison and allowed me to drop the letter into a pillar-box. My only torture during those first

few days was the unhappiness of my queen. I wired Mrs. S. to know how you were, but the wire was sent back with a note that it could not be delivered as she had gone to R. Finally your first letter came, and then I knew for the first time that you were safe. You must not mind my being in the infirmary. I am only there because it is more comfortable than being in a cell, and you have longer hours of association, from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m., instead of being locked up at 6 and obliged to eat by yourself. The infirmary is a collection of rooms, and each has a room to himself—Dillon is in a cell, but he is allowed as a special privilege to come over and associate with us during the daytime. I am obliged to invent little maladies for myself from day to day in order to give Dr. Kenny an excuse for keeping me in the infirmary, but I have never felt better in my life. Have quite forgotten that I am in prison, and should very much miss the rattle of the keys and the slam of the doors. The latest discovery is heart affection.

The only thing I don't like is that the Government insist upon sending a lot of police into the gaol every night, two of whom sleep against my door and two more under my window. Just at present we are all in great disgrace on account of the manifesto, and the poor warders have been most of them dismissed and fresh ones brought in. A very strict watch is kept, and I have been obliged to exert my ingenuity to get letters out to you and to get yours in return. If Wifie is very good and becomes strong and happy again I may let her come over and see me after a time, but for five days more I am not to be allowed to see any visitor, but I will write you again about your coming. They have let us off very easily. I fully expected that we should have been scattered in different gaols through the country as a punishment, but they evidently think no other place safe enough for me. Indeed, this place is not safe, and I can get out whenever I like, but it is probably the best policy to wait to be released. And now good-night, my own dear little Wifie. Promise your husband that you will sleep well and look as beautiful when we meet again as the last time I pressed your sweet lips. YOUR OWN HUSBAND.

October 26, 1881.

MY DEAR MRS. O'SHEA,—Many thanks for your kind letter. I am anxiously waiting for another note from you to say that you have quite recovered from the indisposition you speak of.

I was in hopes that time would pass more slowly in prison than outside, but it seems to pass quite as quickly as anywhere else except those hours at Eltham.—Yours always,

C. S. P.

October 28, 1881.

MY DEAR MRS. O'SHEA,—Not having heard from you this week, I write this to say that I hope you are better, and that the absence of a letter from you is not to be attributed to any increase in the indisposition of which you spoke in your last.

I am glad to be able to tell you that I am exceedingly well. Health and spirits never better.—Yours very truly,

CHAS. S. PARNELL.

November 1, 1881.

MY DEAR MRS. O'SHEA,—Thanks very much for your letters and telegram.

I was rather indisposed yesterday, but am very much better to-day. I am told that everybody gets a turn after they have been here for three or four weeks, but that they then become all right. I write you this lest you and other friends should be troubled by exaggerated reports in the newspapers.

My esteemed friend Mr. Forster has become very disagreeable lately. He refuses to allow me to see my solicitor except in presence and hearing of two warders, so I have declined to see him at all. He also refuses to allow me to see visitors except in the cage, which I have also declined to do, but probably things may be relaxed again after a time.—Yours very truly,

C. S. P.

Parnell had a certain visitor who was permitted to see him in Kilmainham on his "necessary and private" business, though not alone, and this gentleman was able to take his letters out, and bring them to him, unobserved, and after putting them into another outer envelope address them to "Mrs. Carpenter" at an address in London, whence I fetched them. Or sometimes he would send a formal letter to me at Eltham enclosing one addressed to some political or other personage. If Willie were at Eltham I would show him this note asking me to post enclosure on a certain date. The enclosure was, of course, to me—sent thus to keep me from the fatigue of going to town so often. The Governor of Kilmainham for some reason became suspicious of Parnell's visitor, and forbade his interviews except in the close proximity of two warders selected by himself, and Parnell refused to see him at all under these restrictions. He wrote me a friendly letter then, telling me this, and other little news of his prison life, as to an ordinary acquaintance, and addressed it direct to Eltham, sending it to be approved by the Governor and posted in the ordinary way. In this letter, that anyone might have seen, there was a message by a private sign to go to the house in town for a letter within a few days. On doing so I found my letter as usual, posted by a friendly warder, and contained in it was a recipe for invisible ink, and this ink could only be "developed" by one particular formula, a combination known only to one chemist. We were saved an infinity of trouble and anxiety, as we could now write between the lines of an ordinary or typewritten letter without detection, and it was no longer essential to

get a third person to direct the envelopes. In time the Governor again became suspicious, and the friendly warder was dismissed—or Parnell was told so. However, this was only a temporary inconvenience, as Parnell was able in a couple of days to reorganise his communications with me, and this time they were not broken.

November 2, 1881.

I have just succeeded in having my communications, which were cut for a while, restored, and have received your letter of Friday night. In writing me please always acknowledge receipt of my letters by their date. I have quite recovered. My illness did me good, and I have a first-rate appetite.

You must not mind the reports about my health. In fact, our "plots" have been completely disarranged by the necessity of writing and wiring my Queenie that there is nothing the matter with me.

I hope to be able to arrange to see you as soon as I hear that W. is firmly fixed.

I look at my beautiful Queen's face every night before I go to bed, and long for the time when I may be with you again. Only for that I should be happier here than anywhere else.

November 5, 1881.

My darling Wifie,—When I received your dear letter to-day I had just time to send you a few hasty lines in acknowledgment; now when everything is quiet and with your own sweet face before me I can give my thoughts up entirely to my Queen, and talk to you almost as well as if you were in my arms. It seems to me a long, long time since our hasty good-bye, although the first three weeks of my present life—which term will have been completed to-morrow morning—has seemed only a moment. I often feel very sad when I think of poor, unhappy Katie waiting for her husband who does not come

any longer as he used to come, but who will come again to her and will not again leave her.

I am trying to make arrangements that my own Queenie may come to me this time. I shall ask my ruler here if I may see my cousin, " Mrs. Bligh, who is coming from England to see me," in his office, and with only himself present. After all, darling, the only way in which I could have escaped being here would have been by going to America, and then I could not have seen you at all, and I know I should not have been so happy or so comfortable in America as here, and, besides, I should have been beset by so many dangers there.

I admire supremely my life of ease, laziness, absence of care and responsibility here. My only trouble is about your health and happiness, and this has been my only trouble from the first. Queenie, then, will see that she also must try not to be so unhappy, especially as her husband's love is becoming stronger and more intense every hour and every day.

You will be anxious to know what my short illness was about. It was of a very unromantic kind—not the heart, but the stomach. I had not much appetite for some days, and was tempted by a turkey to eat too much, thence very severe indigestion and considerable pain for about an hour. However, " our doctor," by means of mustard and chlorodyne, got me all right again, and my appetite is now as good as ever. In fact, I have gotten over very quickly the " mal du prison " which comes on everybody sooner or later more or less severely.

One of the men in this quarter who has been here for nearly nine months, poor fellow, looks after me as if he was my—brother, I was going to say, but I will substitute Mary.* He makes me a soda and lemon in the morning, and then gives me my breakfast. At dinner he takes care that I get all the nicest bits and concocts the most perfect black coffee in a "Kaffee Kanne" out of berries, which he roasts and grinds fresh each day. Finally, in the evening, just before we are separated for the night, he brews me a steaming tumbler of hot whisky. He has marked all my clothes for me also, and

* My parlourmaid.

sees that the washerwoman does not rob me. Don't you begin to feel quite jealous?

I am going to ask Katie to put her proper initials upon the inner envelope of her next letter—thus, K. P. Your writing on the outside envelope of the one which came to-day will do splendidly.

I do not think there is the least probability of my being moved; this is the strongest place they have, and they are daily trying to increase its strength according to their own notions, which are not very brilliant. My room is very warm and perfectly dry. They wanted me to go to another, which did not face the sun, but I refused, so they did not persist.

With a thousand kisses to my own Wifie, and hoping soon to lay my head in its old place.

Good-night, my darling.

November 7, 1881.

I did not advertise in *Standard.*

My darling Queenie,—Your two letters received, and King is very much troubled about you.

I am very warm—have fire and gas in my room all night if I want it.

Dearest Wifie must try and get back her spirits and good looks for her own husband's sake. C. S. P.

November 12, 1881.

My darling Wifie,—I have received my darling's letter of the 9th quite safely, also the enclosure in the previous one, which I will keep as you wish it; but I shall not want it, my own love.

The statement about the food was only to prepare the way to get up a collection in the country so as to save the American money for other purposes.

We think of announcing by and by that we have gone on Government food, and then start the subscription, as there is no other way of getting money from the country. In any

case, this could not affect me, as I am in the infirmary, and should be entitled to get whatever Dr. Kenny orders for me. Wifie may depend upon it that whatever happens we shall take good care of ourselves; at present we are living upon all the good things of the world—game, etc. The authorities have intimated to me twice that I may go out if I will say that I will go abroad, but I have replied that I am not in any hurry, and that when I go out I shall go or stay where I please. In fact, I much prefer to wait here till the meeting of Parliament.

Will write Wifie a long letter to-morrow.

YOUR OWN KING.

November 14, 1881.

MY OWN QUEENIE,—Your husband continues very well, and very much contented with the position of things outside.

I am told the Government don't exactly know what to do with us now they have got us, and will take the first decent excuse which presents itself of sending us about our business.

Queenie's letters give me great comfort, as I think I see by them she is not quite so unhappy as she was, and has more hope of seeing her King soon again. I am in a continual state of alarm, however, lest something may hurt you.

ALWAYS YOUR KING.

Saturday.

MY OWN QUEENIE,—I hope my darling will not hurt herself going after those letters. I have got some paper to write direct to you, and shall try one on Monday. I do not use it for writing to anybody else, so that Queenie need not be afraid of that, but she should write very lightly, and with a gold pen.

My own little Wifie, I so wish I could be with you to comfort and take care of you, but will you not try to care for yourself, my darling, for my sake?

YOUR OWN LOVING KING.

My dearest Queenie,—I write hastily to say that I am receiving your darling letters all right, though the watch is very close, and it is difficult to get them either out or in.

I am exceedingly well, sleep very well, go to bed at ten or eleven, or whenever I like, get up at nine, or whenever I like.

Do, beautiful Wifie, take care of yourself and your King's child.

November 18, 1881.

Use thinner letter paper in future, as envelopes are suspiciously bulky.

Your own King continues very well, and has received your two letters safely.

Our mutual friend is waiting for me at present, and probably has some more for me and will take this. I have just heard on good authority that they intend to move me to Armagh the end of this week or beginning of next in order to give me an opportunity of escaping while there. However, they may change their mind, and in any case it will make no difference to me personally. Armagh is healthier and nicer in every way, I am told by our Chief W., who comes from there. I am also told, on the same authority who informed me of projected move to Armagh, that we shall be certainly all released before Christmas.

I am disposed to think I have got heavier, but shall know to-morrow when I weigh.

Best love to our child.

Your loving Husband.

November 21, 1881.

My own Queenie,—Yours of the 18th has reached me safely, and though I am relieved to know that my darling is a little less miserable, yet I am still very much troubled and anxious about you. Has he* left yet? It is frightful that you should be exposed to such daily torture. My own Wifie

* Captain O'Shea was staying at Eltham for some days.

must try and strengthen herself, and get some sleep for her husband's sake and for our child's sake, who must be suffering much also.

I am convinced that if it had not been for the unfortunate result of Tyrone I should not be here. I hope that Stafford may be followed by another success in Derry, and that it may open their eyes to the danger of their present proceedings. I *can* really honestly tell Wifie that my health is not only as good, but better than it has been at any time for the last twelve months.

I don't know who it was sent me the quilt; I am sending it to Wicklow, as it is green—a colour I detest. I don't want it here at all, as there are too many things on my bed as it is.

EVER YOUR OWN KING.

November 29, 1881.

The Woolwich or Charlton post offices will do very well when you recommence writing.

MY OWN QUEENIE,—I was very happy in receiving my darling's letter of yesterday to-day. My messenger was looking very frightened, and fears his letters may be opened any day. So perhaps it will be safest for Wifie not to write again for a few days, until I see further, or until I can manage another address. I can manage, however, to write my Queenie two or three times a week. You must not be frightened if you see we have all gone on P. F.* It will not be so as far as we are concerned here, and will only be for a week as regards the others, but Wifie must not tell anybody that I have not done so, as it would create discontent amongst the others. The man who has been taking care of me is going out to-morrow, and will be a loss to me. He has been very ill during the last week from bad sore throat, and was very nearly suffocated the night before last, so I sent O'Gorman Mahon to Forster about him, with the desired effect of getting his discharge. One of the others will supply his place to me, but not so well.

* Prison fare.

Have not been weighed yet, but will to-morrow. I think Wifie has my last weight. After eight at night I read books, newspapers, and write until about twelve or one, when I go to bed. I also think a good deal of my own darling during that time when everything is quiet, and wonder how soon I shall be with you again.

The time is passing rather more slowly this month than the first, but still it is not yet monotonous.

With best love.

Thursday.

My own Queenie,—I have just received your two letters, one of Tuesday, the other 25th, and am enormously relieved to find you are well. You can direct the next envelopes in a feigned hand; it is safer than sending you any more. The outside envelope of yours of the 25th appears to have been tampered with, but the inside one is all right. I am trying to arrange that you may see me as soon as he* is gone to Madrid, and you become quite strong, and will write you more fully about it to-morrow. Always your King.

Gum your inside envelopes well. There is no risk of my being moved.

December 3, 1881.

My own Queenie,—Your letter of the 1st has just reached me.

You ought to have had a note by the 1st explaining about P. fare, and suggesting caution until another means of communication can be found, as my messenger fears his letters may be opened any day.

I am exceedingly well, and am not really on prison fare, as we can get anything we want here.

Am rejoiced to learn that Wifie hopes our child will be strong—I think it ought to have a good constitution.

All my pains and aches have quite disappeared, and I have

* Captain O'Shea.

become quite acclimatised. I expect to be so fresh when I get out that even Wifie won't be able to hold me, although her bonds are very strong and pleasant.

ALWAYS YOUR KING.

Tuesday, December 6, 1881.

MY QUEENIE,—I have not yet been able to arrange other means of communication for my own darling, but hope to do so shortly.

Her dear letter of the 1st has reached me quite safely, but it would be a risk for her to write again to the same place. In any case I will send you in my next a prescription which will enable you to write ordinary letters with something added.

Your King never felt nearly so well in his life before. The strong exercise, ball-playing, which I have missed very much during the last few years of my life, is improving me immensely, as strong exercise always agreed with me.

YOUR OWN KING.

Wednesday, December 7, 1881.

MY OWN QUEENIE,—You will see a paragraph about my health in the *Freeman* of Friday which may worry you, so I write to say that it is very much exaggerated for the purpose of preventing a change in our rooms to some which are not in any way so nice.

I have caught a slight cold, which the doctor thinks will pass off in a day or two.

I will write you direct to-morrow with the secret ink of which the prescription is on the other side. No. 1 is for writing, No. 2 is for bringing it out. Wifie may write me with this to the same address as usual and in the same way, but she should write also with ordinary ink on the first page of the letter something as follows:

> DEAR SIR,—I have yours of —— inst., and will pay attention to the directions given.—Yours truly,
>
> R. CAMPBELL.

The secret handwriting should be with a clean quill pen, and should be written lightly.

I feel much better this afternoon than I did this morning.

ALWAYS YOUR LOVING HUSBAND.

You had best test the No. 1 solution by attempting to bring it out with No. 2. If it does not come out well increase the strength of both solutions. Use unglazed rough paper. Do not be worried, darling, and take good care of our child.

Friday, December 9, 1881.

MY OWN QUEENIE,—I wired you yesterday as I was dreadfully frightened about the effect the par in *Freeman* would have on you, and hope you did not get into overmuch trouble about telegram.

The feverish cold quite passed away yesterday after one night, and I am up to-day but keeping a poor mouth, so as to try and baulk a pretty scheme for moving us from our present rooms into others where they think we will be safer. You must not pay any attention to O. D.'s account, as it was carefully got up.

I don't eat bread, only for breakfast, but D. and I have each two raw chops smuggled in daily which we do for ourselves, and we also make our own tea.

We also always have a cold ham in stock—Queenie must not think I am deceiving her about anything—I never felt as well in my life as when I wrote to tell her so the evening before I was taken ill, and next morning I woke with a hot head.

At present I am getting all my food from the Governor's kitchen, and it is excellent.

We hope by the row we are making to compel Government to make the food sufficiently good to satisfy the men and take expense of their keep off our resources.

In future you had best brush any letters I write you to E. with No. 2 solution, as, unless you desire me not to do so, I will write you for the future alternately to E. and W. Place so as to save you the trouble and fatigue of going to London so often.

ALWAYS YOUR OWN HUSBAND.

December 13, 1881.

My own Queenie,—Your two letters have reached me quite safely and are all right.

I am quite well again now, and could go out were it not that the weather is so cold that the doctor does not think it prudent.

I hope my darling is well and has not been hurt by the anxiety. My mind has been in the utmost distress about my Wifie and her child all the week, and you do not know what a relief your telegram from London was.

December 14, 1881.

My darling Queenie,—Your second letter reached me all right, and I can read them perfectly. But, my darling, you frighten me dreadfully when you tell me that I am "surely killing" you and our child.

I am quite well again now, my own, and was out to-day for a short time, and will take much better care of myself for the future. It was not the food, but a chill after over-heating myself at ball. But I do not intend to go back on prison fare, even nominally, again, as the announcement that we were on it has served the purpose of stimulating the subscription.

Rather than that my beautiful Wifie should run any risk I will resign my seat, leave politics, and go away somewhere with my own Queenie, as soon as she wishes; will she come? Let me know, darling, in your next about this, whether it is safe for you that I should be kept here any longer.

Your own Husband.

There can be no doubt we shall be released at opening of Parliament, but I think not sooner.

Dr. K. was allowed to be with me at night while I was ill, and we are not to be changed from our rooms.

December 15, 1881.

My own darling Queenie,—Nothing in the world is worth the risk of any harm or injury to you. How could I

ever live without my own Katie?—and if you are in danger, my darling, I will go to you at once.

Dearest Wifie, your letter has frightened me more than I can tell you. Do write, my darling, and tell me that you are better. I have had nothing from you for several days. I am quite well and strong again.

We have made arrangements so that everybody will be allowed to feed himself for the future, the poorer men getting so much a week.

YOUR OWN HUSBAND.

December 16, 1881.

MY OWN QUEENIE,—I think it will be best to make the change you suggest in yours of yesterday, but you need not trouble or fatigue yourself about it immediately.

I am going on all right, darling, and expect to have another game of ball to-morrow, but shall take care not to heat myself.

I could not very well make any arrangement or enter into any undertaking with Government unless I retired altogether from politics.

Your letter has relieved me very much. I have been dreadfully frightened about you for the last week. Do take care of yourself, my own darling, and I will also take good care of myself for the future.

We have both to live for each other for many happy years together.

You need not write near so heavily or use so much ink, and it would be also better to have a softer paper, more like blotting paper.

YOUR OWN KING.

December 21, 1881.

Your two letters of the 20th and that of the 19th duly received. Have not yet been able to read those of 20th, but will reply to-morrow.

I am very well and delighted to hear that Queenie is safe.

In haste,

YOUR OWN KING.

[*Facsimile of letter on pp. 225-6.*]

Dec. 15th.

My own darling Queenie
Nothing in the world is worth the risk of any harm or injury to you. How could I ever live without my own Katie, and if you are in danger my darling I will go to you at once. Dearest Wifie your letter has frightened me more than I can tell you. Do write my darling and tell me

that you are better –
I have had nothing from
you for several days.
I am quite well and
strong again – We
have made arrangements
so that everybody will
be allowed to feed
himself for the future
the poorer men getting
so much a week –
Your own husband

December 22, 1881.

Many happy returns of Christmas, my own darling. Though your husband cannot be with you this time, he looks forward to very many happy returns with you.

I am very, very happy that my own Wifie is better, and that she has been relieved from some of the intolerable annoyance for a time.

Your husband is quite well. We have succeeded in getting our new exercise ground.

ALWAYS YOUR LOVING KING.

Xmas Eve.

Letters of 22nd and 23rd arrived safely.

MY OWN QUEENIE,—Just as the coming day is approaching I send my own love what she has asked me for, and trust that it will make her forget our squabble of last Xmas Day, as I had long since forgotten it.

My darling, you are and always will be everything to me, and every day you become more and more, if possible, more than everything to me.

Queenie need not be in the least anxious about me. I have been getting my meals from the Governor's kitchen up to the present, but to-morrow we return to the old arrangement of being supplied from the outside. Nominally we are to get only one meal a day from the outside, but in reality they will permit those who wish and can afford it to get the other two meals as well from outside, at their own expense, of course, and those who are with me in these quarters intend to do this. I do not receive any letters from any ladies I know, except one from Mrs. S., shortly after I came here. She wrote to sympathise, and said she had been ill. I replied after a time, asking how *you* were, but forgot to ask how *she* was, and she has not written since. Am glad to say that none of my " young women " have written.

Let me know as soon as he goes and I will write you home.

Government are not likely to go out for a while, but they will scarcely go out without letting me out first.

YOUR OWN KING.

December 30, 1881.

MY OWN QUEENIE,—Your two letters just received but not read yet. I hope Wifie is sleeping better and getting stronger like her husband.

I am very nervous about the doctors, and you should at all events tell one of them the right time, so that he may be on hand, otherwise you may not have one at all. It will never do to run this risk.

I will write Queenie a long letter to-night.

CHAPTER XXIV

MORE KILMAINHAM LETTERS

"The soul of a philosopher will consider that it is the office of philosophy to set her free."

SOCRATES.

January 3, 1882.

MY OWN DARLING QUEENIE,—Many happy New Years, my own love, with your husband to make you happy.

My Queenie must take great care of herself, and must be sure to have at least one doctor in February. It will never do to let it trust to chance.

There is every prospect of my being able to see my darling soon, but it does not do to be too sure, as things change so much from day to day.

January 7, 1882.

MY OWN QUEENIE,—If Queenie could see her husband reading her letters over and over again every night she would have more faith in their readable quality and power for giving her husband happiness than she can have in looking at the blank paper as the result of her work. The paper of that of the 6th, which reached me to-day, is exactly suited; but Wifie, in sending two sheets, one of them quite blank, makes a bad conspirator, but I must forgive her, as the result is by no means blank to me.

I do feel very anxious about you, my darling, and cannot help it. You must tell the doctor, and never mind about ——. Could you not go to London or Brighton about the beginning of February? London would be best, if you could

get him away on any pretext; but if you could not, Brighton would leave you most free from him.

It is perfectly dreadful that Wifie should be so worried at night. I had hoped that the doctor's orders would have prevented that.

I am being fed very well. Chops or grilled turkey or eggs and bacon for breakfast, soup and chops for luncheon, and joint and vegetables, etc., for dinner, and sometimes oysters. The "one meal a day" is only a pretence. Each man gets £2 when arrested, and 15s. a week, and can feed himself as he likes. Most of them pocket the money and make the Government feed them. You can understand the unwillingness of W.'s friend to leave under these circumstances. The Government food is much better now after the row about it, so most of the men can manage very well with it, and send the 15s. home or put it in bank. I expect the majority of the Irish people will be here after a time, the pay is so good and it is quite a safe place. I am very well, dearest Queenie, and enjoying our new exercise yard very much.

YOUR OWN KING.

January 11, 1882.

MY OWN QUEENIE,—Yes, I will go to you, my love, immediately I am released. There is nothing in the world that I can do in Ireland, nor is it likely that I shall be able to do anything here for a long time to come. Certainly until the Coercion Act has expired I will not speak here again, so Queenie need not be afraid that when she gets me again she will lose me.

I am disposed to think that Government at present intend to release me shortly before opening of Parliament, but, of course, they may change their mind and hasten or postpone my release. Anyhow, let Queenie's mind be quite at rest, I am very well and am growing more vigorous every day, the air and exercise in the new yard suiting me exactly.

I long very, very much to be with my own Wifie again, and wish I could take care of and comfort her in the time that is coming—Queenie has been very good and very loving

to her husband to give him this child, and to take such care of it during this long, sad interval, but she must remember that she is far more to me than all the world beside, and that she must specially take care of herself, as her King cannot now live without her.

I had forgotten to tell you that the jacket and other things you gave me have been very useful and comfortable. During my illness I wore it all the time, and wear it now in the mornings to read the newspapers. It has quite cured pain in shoulder.

I do trust you have been now relieved for a time by his departure, and that you are getting a little sleep. It is enough to have killed you several times over, my own Queenie.

ALWAYS YOUR OWN HUSBAND.

January 17, 1882.

MY OWN QUEENIE,—The large paper is very good, the best for the purpose of any you have tried yet.

Your husband is so happy that you have at last been left free for a time.

Queenie may send her letters from any place about that she likes, but she had best not write direct, as there is a very sharp-eyed man over the letters.

Very much lighter writing will do, and it might be written between the lines of the ordinary ink, but it is best not to risk anything just now.

I think Brighton will do very well if Wifie likes it, and if it would be safe for her to be so far from London. Her King could be there quite well, as he intends to take a holiday when released, and will not go to work at once.

Have just received formal and usual notice of further detention, first three months being up. The other two have also received theirs. This has no significance one way or the other, as nobody has ever been released at the end of the exact period. My own Wifie must try and keep herself well and strong. Does she feel so? I wish I could be with my poor darling.

It is really the only reason why I wish for a change, and my Queenie's loneliness and weariness makes me very unhappy.

Yesterday and to-day as three of us were exercising in our yard the gates in adjoining yard leading into the outer world were opened twice to permit some carts to come in and go out. A low wall only separated the two yards, across which we could have easily sprung; there was no warder in our yard, and only one in the next, with his back turned to us. So, you see, we can get out whenever we want to. Trying to escape is six months with hard labour, so we have nothing to gain by it, even if they keep us till end of Act in October, which they are not at all likely to do.

YOUR OWN LOVING HUSBAND.

January 21, 1882.

MY OWN QUEENIE,—On further consideration I think it would be much too risky for my darling to go to Brighton, as you would be too far from the doctor, so let it be London or home. I shall find means to see my Wifie wherever she is.

It looks like our release shortly.

Yours of 19th received.

January 23, 1882.

We have got an air-gun and practise every day.

MY OWN QUEENIE,—Your letter of the day before yesterday makes me very nervous about my own love again, as I fear from it that you are going to distress and worry yourself about me again. I can assure you, my own, that I am exceedingly well, and am likely to remain so.

Notwithstanding the newspapers, it is most unlikely they will keep us here till the commencement of session. D., indeed, will probably go out in a day or two on account of his health; but in any case my Queenie must not think of worrying about her husband, as he is very comfortable and happy where he is, if he might only see his own Wifie sometimes. I should feel quite lonely now in London without

being able to see my darling, and I should very much prefer to stay here than to be all alone in London while Wifie is suffering, except that I know it would comfort her to have me even so near her.

I hope you have received my letter saying that I think London or home the best for you, and not Brighton; the latter would be much too far from the doctors. Does Wifie feel strong and well? I fear my poor Queenie has had a dreadful time of it, and our poor little child also.

YOUR OWN LOVING KING.

January 28, 1882.

MY OWN DEAREST QUEENIE,—I did not like to write direct, lest there should be any mistake, especially as my paper is not very suitable. It looks as if they were going to keep me here for a while longer, probably till a month or so after the opening of session, in order that they may get their new rules more easily.

I do not know what to say, my darling, about your going to Brighton, but Queenie will decide best for herself. I hope Wifie will not feel much worried about not seeing me so soon as she hoped. Her husband is very well indeed, and in the best of spirits.

I do not like your going to London so often, it may hurt you. Is there any address you could get nearer home, so that you would not have to go so far?

My poor little Wifie, I wish I could be with you, but Queenie must be good and take care of herself.

It looks to-day as if D. would go out soon; in that case it would facilitate our release. YOUR OWN KING.

January 31, 1882.

Have received your two letters postmarked E. Be cautious about writing for a few days. I am very well, and trust my darling is well.

Rumours about legal adviser being arrested, but will send you another address to-morrow.

February 2, 1882.

MY OWN QUEENIE,—Have just received your third letter with E. postmark—shall write you to-morrow direct so as to avoid for you the fatigue of going to London. The writing between the lines comes out perfectly, and you need at no time write more heavily.

With best love and urgent request that my darling will take care of herself. YOUR OWN KING.

February 3, 1882.

MY OWN QUEENIE,—You really must try and sleep properly at night and stop worrying yourself about me. I can assure my darling there is nothing to feel unhappy about so far as my health goes. I really cannot remember when I have ever felt so well in my life.

It is very very hard not to be able to see each other, and that my poor Wifie should not have her husband with her now—I think after this letter I shall be able to write you a few lines occasionally home, so as to save Wifie going to London, but if she writes to me in the same way she must be very careful and write very lightly and between the lines. A gold pen is, I think, better than a quill.

The alarm about the legal adviser has blown over, so Queenie may direct as usual.

The Paris failures don't concern us in any way, as everything is secure.*

Give my best love to our little child, and take good care of yourself and it for my sake. YOUR OWN HUSBAND.

February 10, 1882.

MY OWN QUEENIE,—I have received your note postmarked 7th, but have not had time to read it yet.

I hope my darling will take better care of herself; that journey to London in the fog was most dangerous for her.

I think that we shall probably be released by the middle

* An allusion to political funds banked in Paris.

of March, as it will be known then which way the tenants intend to go, and we shall be able to decide whether it is worth our while remaining here any longer.

How does Queenie intend letting her husband know how she is? YOUR OWN LOVING KING.

February 14.

MY OWN DARLING QUEENIE,—To-day I have written you direct, sending a few words between the lines, just to see how it will answer. I find that rubbing with blotting paper after the words are dry takes away any glistening or appearance of letters. My own Wifie had best not try writing direct here, but send all her letters as usual, and continue to do so.

The note I have just written goes out through a warder, and I think I shall always be able to manage in that way, but in case Queenie should get a letter from me through the Governor she will see it marked with his initials on the top left-hand corner, and in that case she might write me a commonplace letter direct here, but nothing between the lines.

Wifie is very good indeed to write her husband such beautiful letters; if she only knew what a pleasure and happiness every word from her is to her husband it might make her feel a little less unhappy. I am very much troubled about my darling having become so thin, and fear that you have suffered a great deal more than you have ever told me, and that you are not strong. I often reproach myself for having been so cruel to my own love in staying so long away from her that time, which has led to such a long, long separation. I was dragged into that Kildare engagement, otherwise I should have been safe with Wifie. Until then I had settled that I should leave Ireland after Wexford. It would, however, have been very difficult for me to have kept out of the country even if I had left then, and on the whole I hope it will turn out all for the best. At least, I am very glad that the days of platform speeches have gone by and are not likely to return. I cannot describe to you the disgust I always felt with those meetings, knowing as I did how hollow and wanting in solidity

everything connected with the movement was. When I was arrested I did not think the movement would have survived a month, but this wretched Government have such a fashion for doing things by halves that it has managed to keep things going in several of the counties up till now. However, next month, when the seeding time comes, will probably see the end of all things and our speedy release.

I hope Wifie has got her house in London; I am exceedingly anxious about those long journeys to London for you, my own. Your husband is very well indeed, and is, I think, actually beginning to grow fat!

I think Queenie ought to congratulate me at being away from the House instead of pitying me.

When I get out I hope to have a good long rest with my own little Wifie somewhere, and to listen to the waves breaking as we used those mornings of spring last May.

YOUR OWN LOVING HUSBAND.

February 17, 1882.

MY OWN QUEENIE,—I had written my Queenie a nice long letter which she should have liked very much, but an alarm came before my messenger arrived that we were all going to be searched, and I was obliged to burn it.

I intend to try and send you a letter direct, written between the lines—I find that by rubbing the words after they are dry it removes all the glistening appearance.

Queenie had best not write me direct at any time, but she can send me a word in the usual way as soon as she is able to tell me how she is. Your King will wait very anxiously for that word. Oh, my Queenie, do take care of yourself, and do not run any risk by remaining at E.

It is exceedingly likely that we shall all be released about the end of March, as then the lading time comes, and the tenants will have to decide whether they will pay or not, and as the majority have decided to pay already it is most likely the minority will then follow suit.

YOUR OWN KING.

February 17, 1882.

MY OWN DARLING QUEENIE,—I cannot describe to you what a relief your little note was that everything was quite right. Oh, my Wifie, when I had your two short messages of the 14th your poor husband burst into tears and could not hold up his head or think of anything until my darling's note arrived that everything was right.

My own, you must be very good and quiet until you are quite strong again, and do not be in a hurry to get up.

I have only just a minute to close this as my Mercury is waiting. YOUR OWN LOVING HUSBAND.

My baby was born on February 16th, 1882. I was very ill, but the joy of possessing Parnell's child carried me through my trouble. She was a beautiful baby, apparently strong and healthy—for the first few weeks—and with the brown eyes of her father. This child of tragedy rarely cried, but lay watching me with eyes thoughtful and searching beyond the possibility of her little life. I used to seek in hers for the fires always smouldering in the depths of her father's eyes, but could not get beyond that curious gravity and understanding in them, lightened only by the little smile she gave when I came near.

* * * * * *

March 5, 1882.

MY DEAR MRS. O'SHEA,—It is so long since I have heard from you that I sometimes wonder whether you have quite forgotten me.

In case you see any of my friends who may inquire after me, will you kindly tell them that I am very well, and that there is no truth in the stupid rumour which appeared in some of the London papers about the seven days' solitary confinement—I was merely prevented from receiving or send-

ing letters for a week; the latter portion of the sentence did not trouble me much, as I am an even worse correspondent in here than when I was outside.

I think you will scarcely know me when you see me again, I have become so fat.

I have not heard from your sister for a great many months; in fact have only had one letter from her since I have been here.

Believe me, yours very truly, CHAS. S. PARNELL.

March 16, 1882.

MY OWN DARLING QUEENIE,—You are very good to your husband in writing so often and so lovingly to your King, even when you must have been suffering terribly. I cannot describe to my little Wifie how hopeless and utterly miserable I felt until your little note came that all was quite right. I am very happy, my own, that our little daughter pleases you, and that you are not too much disappointed, and that she is strong and good-tempered. Does Queenie think she will be too big? I shall love her very much better than if it had been a son; indeed, my darling, I do love her very much already, and feel very much like a father. What do you intend to call her?

Will you not give her papa's best love and innumerable kisses?

I have been arranging a little happiness, I hope, for Queenie, as soon as she is strong and well enough to come over here and can manage it. I have been training up Captain Barlow, the chairman of the Prisons Board, to allow me to see my married sisters in private. To-day I got him to give me a private visit with one of them, Mrs. Dickinson, for the first time, and I did so with the intention of passing Queenie off as another married sister after a time. Wifie will then be able to come and see for herself how well her husband looks, and how happy and comfortable he is. I don't know whether they intend to move me or not, and do not like to guess, but wherever I go I shall be probably very well off. The dusting

they got in the House the other night about treatment of the rank and file will do them good. I am told that all the police in the King's County were drafted into Tullamore and put into plain clothes to form an audience for Forster. Shall send Wifie my weight to-morrow with certificate of chief warder so that you may believe it.

Do you remember what it was the last time? I think Wifie has the ticket, and that it was about twelve stone.

I hear from all over the country that the tenants are everywhere settling, so we shall be probably out in a couple of months, unless we are kept to make sure that they pay the next time.

I hope my own love will take good care of herself and not try to go to London too soon. I want Queenie when I see her to be an even younger little Wifie than when I gave her that last kiss.

The idea of nursing our little daughter was too preposterous. Do, my own darling, think of yourself and take great, great care of your husband's own little Wifie.

Good-night, my own darling Queenie.

YOUR LOVING HUSBAND.

March 23, 1882.

MY OWN DARLING WIFIE,—I have only just got an opportunity of sending my Queenie a few lines, and will write a nice long letter to-night.

No letter came to me from you between that dated March 14 and the two of March 20. A reference to his* return from Paris makes me think that you may have sent me one between, informing me that he had gone, which I did not receive. If you think one has been intercepted write in future to Mr. W. Kerr, Casino, Rathdrum, and they will reach me safely, otherwise no change need be made.

The letter written between the lines, of which I spoke, was that refused by the warder, and I did not send it.

* Captain O'Shea.

Mrs. S. has written me that she has "seen you recently," and that you "have not yet left your room," assuming that I know all about it. What am I to say to her?

I have not been weighed yet, but shall try to-day and send my own darling the true weight. It must be considerably more than 12–5.

My beautiful little Wifie must continue to take great care of herself and not go too often to town.

YOUR OWN LOVING KING.

March 24, 1882.

MY OWN QUEENIE,—Since writing you yesterday have received your letter dated 17th, which had accidentally gone astray, so if there is no other letter which I ought to have got you can send to the same address as usual.

YOUR OWN KING.

March 27, 1882.

MY OWN DARLING QUEENIE,—I am very anxious about our little daughter. Is it dangerous?

Was weighed yesterday—12 st. 7 lb. Have certainly gained five or six pounds since I have been here.

How did Wifie find out I had grown a beard?

YOUR OWN LOVING KING.

I don't think we shall be moved.

March 29, 1882.

MY OWN DARLING LITTLE WIFIE,—I am very much relieved to hear that our little child is better, and is likely to be all right soon; but fear my poor Queenie must have been exhausted by all that hunting about for nurses. I cannot consent to Wifie turning nurse even when brown eyes do come. She is much too good and beautiful for anything of the kind.

Do you remember a small pair of scissors with fine points that Queenie once gave me in London? I have got them still, and cut my cigar with them every morning.

Shall write Mrs. —— as you suggest, and say am sorry to hear you had not yet left your room, and that I had seen the event in the *Times* and hoped you would soon be quite well again. If my own can make an arrangement now for him* to keep away, I think she ought to do so. It will be too intolerable having him about always. When I see Wifie again or am released, I can consider the situation, but until then, if you can you had best make some arrangement.

Wifie must not be frightened at the vapourings of the Government yesterday; they amount to nothing, and they know perfectly well that neither I nor any of my friends outside have sanctioned in any way certain recent deplorable occurrences. They are simply the result of leaving the people without guidance and appear to be quite spontaneous. In any case the country is likely to quiet down as the days get longer and the crops commence to spring up. D. is to be released immediately the House adjourns for Easter, and after a time, when they find nothing happening as a consequence of his release, they will probably take courage and let me out also. Anyhow this Government are going down the hill ve-y fast, and are not likely to last more than another session, and we will take care that if they once go out they shall not come in again very quickly. My own loveliest Wifie, I do not think they intend moving me. YOUR LOVING HUSBAND.

March 30.—The London correspondent of *Freeman* is very ignorant.

March 30, 1882.

MY OWN LITTLE WIFIE,—The letter posted at Bexley reached me all right after it had gone astray for two or three days. Queenie's of 28th has also reached me.

I suppose you did not address one to Casino, as I have had none from there. I wrote yesterday to say that I think you had best make some arrangement about him pending my release, and when that takes place we can consider further.

* Captain O'Shea.

I will let my darling see me any time as soon as she is quite strong again. We are going to have a weekly biography of doubtful Irish members in *Irishman* or rather *United Ireland* which will come out again shortly in such a form as to save it from seizure.

If Queenie sends me some of our daughter's hair I will put it in the locket I have with Wifie's. Would Sophie make a nice second name? It was the name of one of my sisters whom I was said to be most like of the family; but possibly it might make suspicions.

I am very anxious about my darling going to London so often, it must be very bad for you. You may try your next letter upon ordinary paper, unglazed, and do not crowd what you write in ordinary ink into one little space in the middle of the sheet. After the solution has dried if you rub over the letters with an ink eraser it will remove all the glistening and appearance of letters. I wonder they have never opened any of them, but they may do it at any time. It would not hurt me in any way as I do not use it for any other purpose. Unless, indeed, they sent it to a certain person.

Queenie must not be alarmed about stupid rumours in the papers. You know what these liners are, and the *Freeman* agent in London is singularly stupid and badly informed.

YOUR LOVING HUSBAND.

April 5, 1882.

MY OWN DEAREST WIFIE,—I think it very likely that something will be done by the Government shortly on the arrears question. If this be so, things will undoubtedly quiet down a great deal, and it will give us an opportunity of coming to some arrangement. I do not in the least apprehend that any further steps will be taken against me in any case, though, of course, they would eagerly grasp at the slightest thing in order to try and throw discredit on me.

So far as I can judge, the number of outrages has dimin-

ished very materially during the last two or three weeks, and is likely to continue decreasing.

My own Wifie must remember that I was only 12 st. 2 lb. when I came here, as I had fallen away very much after I left her, and that I have got back 5 lb. since, notwithstanding my illness, which left me very thin indeed. Poor little Queenie must be greatly troubled and anxious at all the rumours she hears, but she need not regard any of them; she knows what newspaper men are.

Give my best love and ever so many kisses to our little daughter. I am very much troubled about her health, and hope it will not make her permanently delicate.

I am longing very very much to see my own Wifie. I love you, my darling, more and more every day, and I should feel quite reconciled to giving up politics for ever and living with my sweet Katie all by ourselves away from everybody and everything. I do not think anything will ever induce me to speak from a platform again. I always disliked it excessively, but I should loathe it now. Wifie must not, however, suppose that I am annoyed with the way things have gone. On the contrary, everything has succeeded remarkably, and much better than anybody could have expected.

It is thought that D.* will be released to-morrow.—Good-night, my own Wifie. YOUR LOVING HUSBAND.

April 7, 1882.

MY OWN DEAREST WIFIE,—I am so happy from receiving your letter of the 5th to-day, although part of what you say about our daughter makes me very anxious indeed.

I hope the poor little thing will soon get over it. Her hair is absolutely lovely. I am so glad it is more like Queenie's than mine, although there is enough of mine in it to spoil it somewhat and render it less beautiful than Wifie's. Still, there is a splendid golden tint in it which is quite exceptional.

Wifie need not feel at all anxious about me or anything

* Dillon.

which the Government are likely to do or be able to do. Although there have been one or two bad events things are getting much quieter every day. D. is going abroad and will not even appear in the House for a couple of months. My mother's health has, I fear, become very much broken latterly, and after a time I think of applying to go over to see her, but I must try and get O. K.* out first.

I am still keeping very well, although have missed the ball-playing very much for the last three weeks, as O. K., who used to play with me, has been ill. I think my weight is very good considering the hard exercise I have been taking and the good condition I am in. I hope my precious one is getting strong again and that she will have some good news to tell me of our little daughter when she writes next.

YOUR OWN LOVING HUSBAND.

I will not speak of my anguish when I found that the child of my love was slowly dying, and that the doctors I called in could do nothing for her. Slowly she faded from me, daily gaining in that far-reaching expression of understanding that dying children have so strongly, and my pain was the greater in that I feared her father would never see her now.

Willie was very good; I told him my baby was dying and I must be left alone. He had no suspicion of the truth, and only stipulated that the child should be baptised at once—urged thereto, I think, by his mother and sister. I had no objection to this. Parnell and I had long before agreed that it would be safer to have the child christened as a Catholic, and he had no feeling at all against the Catholic religion, considering, indeed, that, for those who required a religion it was an admirable one. I made an altar of

* O'Kelly.

flowers in my drawing-room, as the child was much too ill to be taken to church, and there the priest, Father Hart, came and baptised Sophie Claude. Sophie, after Parnell's sister, Claude, after Lord Truro, an old friend of mine.

A few days before the death of my baby I had the unspeakable comfort of knowing that Parnell could come to me for a few hours and perhaps see his child while she lived. His nephew, son of his sister Delia (Mrs. Thomson), had died in Paris, and the authorities gave Parnell leave on "parole" to attend the young man's funeral. A brilliant, handsome fellow, great sympathy was felt with the parents of this only son.

Spring was very early that year, and in the April morning when the air was fragrant with the sweet freshness of the spring flowers and the very breath of life was in the wind, Parnell came to me and I put his dying child into his arms.

That evening he had to go on to Paris.

Grand Hotel,
12 Boulevard des Capucines, Paris,
Thursday, April 13, 1882.

My own Queenie,—I hope to leave Paris on Saturday morning. The doctor says the fever is not infectious, but I doubt it very much, as a great many people amongst the American colony are having it just now. I am staying here, but I am obliged to go to the house, which has been well disinfected, to see my sister, who is very much cut up. The risk to me is a minimum, as I had this fever very badly when I was young, and they say people very rarely have it a second time, and then only slightly.

At all events it is the ordinary typhoid, which doctors say is not catching.

I shall take a Turkish bath every day I am here, and adopt other precautions. YOUR OWN LOVING KING.

GRAND HOTEL,
12 BOULEVARD DES CAPUCINES, PARIS,
Saturday, April 15, 1882.

MY DEAR MRS. O'SHEA,—I think of leaving Paris to spend a few days in the south or elsewhere on Monday morning. Had intended starting this evening, but caught a slight cold coming over, which the doctor, whom my sister insisted on seeing me, says is nothing, but think I had best not travel till Monday.

I am very glad that I came over, as my sister is in a very low state, and my coming has picked her up very much.

Believe me, yours always truly,

CHARLES S. PARNELL.

GRAND HOTEL,
12 BOULEVARD DES CAPUCINES, PARIS,
Sunday, April 16, 1882.

MY DEAR MRS. O'SHEA,—Having fallen into the hands of the doctor, he informed me to-day that he was coming again to-morrow morning, and upon my saying that I wished to commence my journey to the country to-morrow he said he would let me go on Tuesday morning. Perhaps it is better so, as I might catch fresh cold if I started so soon as to-morrow.

I was out a good deal yesterday by the doctor's orders, and dined with my sister in the evening. She is much better.

To-day a north wind is blowing, and I shall not go out much, although my cold is quite gone. I think I caught it from leaving off a flannel jacket which I used to wear when asleep in prison. It would have been a bad chest cold had I not taken two Turkish baths immediately I felt it coming on.



CLAUDE SOPHIE: BORN FEB 15, 1882, DIED APRIL 21, 1882

I am staying here under the name of Stewart, and have not been found out yet.—Yours very sincerely,

CHARLES S. PARNELL.

After his nephew's funeral he returned to Eltham, having, before, telegraphed to Willie to say that he was coming. He wished to conciliate Willie as much as possible, and believed that his politics might now prove useful.

All that night of the 21st April Parnell and Willie sat up in my dining-room discussing the Irish question, and bit by bit working out the "Kilmainham Treaty." Willie wanted me to join them, but I would not leave my baby, and when the daylight came and they went to lie down for a few hours' rest before Parnell left for Ireland, my little one died as my lover stole in to kiss us both and say good-bye.

Overlooking the valley in the Catholic churchyard at Chislehurst is her little grave, headed by a granite cross and wreathed about with clematis and white roses; and often as we drove past on our way home through the summer evenings Parnell would go in to scatter the wild flowers he had gathered for me over little Sophie's resting-place.

The following letter from my sister-in-law, Mary O'Shea, I insert, as proving, I think very conclusively, that my little one's paternity was utterly unsuspected by the O'Sheas.

PARIS, AVENUE WAGRAM 137,
Sunday, *May* 21, 1882.

DEAREST KATIE,—We are very pleased to be able to hope that you are better. How is your dear aunt? We trust she is better. I cannot express our feelings of affectionate

regard for her, nor can I say adequately how truly we desire her happiness here and for all eternity in Heaven. She has been so sweet a friend and so charming in all her ways towards your dear children, "the butterflies," most attractive designation. Dear Lady O'Donnell wrote a rapturous description of the little creatures. She loved your dear little Claude, and shared your grief at losing her, but, happy child, how glorious is her existence! What a contrast to ours, we who must struggle on, working out our salvation in fear and trembling! William * will have told you of mamma's long and trying illness; she is getting on favourably, and, as ever, patient and united to the will of God. I can scarcely leave her for an instant. Last Sunday I was not at Mass even. On the Feast of the Ascension I was able to go to St. Augustine, and before doing so I made a call in company with a friend at a house where I had never been before, and, of course, shall never be again.†

We have friends from Italy at present staying in Paris, but they perfectly understood that I cannot leave my dear mother, and do not expect visits. I called only once upon them, but they came here Friday; mamma was for the first time able to sit up, and Prince and Princess Emmanuel de Gonzaque came and met here the Bishop of Killaloe, who inquired most kindly for you, and is always interested about William, to whom he wrote offering his tribute of sympathy, as well as with you, on the death of your dear baby. He had not since heard from any of us, as I could neither find time for letters nor for going out, but he received two newspapers a few days ago, and perfectly understands the hurry of busy life at this season in London. I have had these last few days, that my dear and infinitely precious Malade has been better and somewhat independent of my constant attention, to seek for facilities in public libraries and other privileges

* Captain O'Shea.

† Miss O'Shea here refers to the house of the Comte de ——, to whom she was then engaged. Miss O'Shea called there, with her friend, to break off the engagement owing to her continuous ill-health. She died not very long afterwards.

for dear Ctesse. de Greppis Abbé—I have partly succeeded. Mamma hopes the children are well. Is dear little Carmen strong? And her amiable and devoted sister—how is she? We hope their brother is in perfect health, no memory even of delicacy still. Doctors say the temperature has been variable all this month, and that transition from heat to cold must be guarded against.

With mamma's love and kindest wishes for your health and comfort, and praying that all blessings may be granted to you and to those you love, with her kindest feelings.—I remain, dearest Katie, your affectionate MARY O'SHEA.

CHAPTER XXV

THE "KILMAINHAM TREATY"

"Shall I say stipulation, King?"
"No, Queenie, he prefers 'suggestions desirable to be entertained!

EXTRACT FROM AN OLD DIARY.

PARNELL, in accordance with his "parole," returned to Kilmainham at the end of the term of leave and immediately formulated the conditions of the arrangement it was proposed to make with the Government. The draft of this historic document was as follows:—

KILMAINHAM, April 25th, 1882.

"We think in the first place that no time should be lost in endeavouring to obtain a satisfactory settlement of the arrears question, and that the solution proposed in the Bill standing for second reading to-morrow—Wednesday—would provide a satisfactory solution, though the Church Fund would have to be supplemented by a grant from Imperial resources of probably a million or so.

"Next as regards the permanent amendment of the Land Act, we consider that the rent-fixing clauses should be amended to as great an extent as is possible, having in view the necessity of passing an Amending Bill through the House of Lords; that leaseholders who have taken leases either before or since the Act of 1870 should be permitted to apply to have a fair rent

fixed, and that the purchase clauses should be amended as suggested by the Bill, the second reading of which will be moved by Mr. Redmond to-morrow.

"If the Government were to announce their intention of proposing a satisfactory settlement of the arrears difficulty as indicated above, we on our part would make it known that the No Rent manifesto was withdrawn, and we should advise the tenants to settle with their landlords; we should also then be in a better position than we ever occupied before to make our exertions effective in putting a stop to the outrages which are unhappily of late so prevalent.

"If the result of the arrears settlement and the further ameliorative measures suggested above were the material diminution of outrages before the end of the session, and the prospect of the return of the country after a time to something like a normal condition, we should hope that the Government would allow the Coercion Act to lapse, and govern the country by the same laws as in England."

Willie wrote to Gladstone on April 13th, and two days after Gladstone replied promising to communicate with Forster. The rest of the letter was taken up with compliments to Willie, and some carefully-worded phrases which really meant that Gladstone was prepared to go to very great lengths indeed to quiet Ireland and to keep her quiet.

Willie sent to Chamberlain a copy of his letter to Gladstone. Chamberlain was impressed and guarded. He welcomed negotiations, but pointed out that if the Government were going to smile on the Irish Party the

Irish Party must smile on the Government. With some amount of exaggerated fervour he mooted the possibility of an anti-Irish movement comparable with the anti-Semitic movement abroad. That, he pointed out, would be bad for everybody, and accordingly he welcomed the olive branch. In the sequel, of course, Chamberlain took a very active part in pressing for the release of Parnell.

While on "parole," and after his return from Paris, Parnell entered into communication with Mr. Justin McCarthy with regard to the proposed "Treaty," and the following letter was written from Eltham:—

Saturday, April 22, 1882.

MY DEAR MCCARTHY,—I have arrived in England, and will call to see you to-morrow afternoon some time. I cannot at present give you the exact hour, but would it be too much to ask you to remain at home after three o'clock? I trust you will have some news of result of Cabinet to-day.—Yours very truly,
C. S. P.

This letter was followed up by one from Kilmainham.

(*Confidential.*)

KILMAINHAM,
April 25, 1882.

MY DEAR MCCARTHY,—I send you a letter embodying our conversation, and which, if you think it desirable, you might take the earliest opportunity of showing to Chamberlain.

Do not let it out of your hands, but if he wishes you might give him a copy of the body of it.—Yours very truly,
CHARLES S. PARNELL.

(*Enclosure.*)

The enclosure was identical with the draft treaty—

apart from a few verbal alterations of which the chief was the substitution of "an Amendment Bill" for an "Amending Bill" in the second paragraph.

*   *   *   *   *   *

Tuesday, April 25, 1882.

MY OWN QUEENIE,—I enclose you a letter. What do you think I had best say to it ? *

I told my friend in Jermyn Street what steps to take, so that the matter referred to in enclosed will probably go on all right without, or with, the further participation of the writer. I thought of writing him that I had received his note too late to reply for Wednesday, but that in any case my letter from Paris ought to be sufficient indication of confidence.

I missed nine train on Sunday and came on by twelve, sleeping at Crewe and getting on board mail boat before mail train arrived. Everything went off very nicely and quietly, and I have not caught any cold this time. O. K. had aired my bed very carefully, etc., and they were all very glad to see me again, with the exception of the authorities.

I have been thinking all day of how desolate and lonely my Queenie must be in her great sorrow. I wish so much that I might have stayed to comfort her, but I have indeed every hope and confidence that our separation will not now last very long. It is too terrible to think that on this the saddest day† of all others—and, let us hope, the saddest that we *both* shall ever see again—my Wifie should have nobody with her.

Good-bye, my own darling, YOUR LOVING KING.

Mr. Parnell wrote as follows to Captain O'Shea :—

KILMAINHAM,

April 28.

I was very sorry that you had left Albert Mansions before

* From Captain O'Shea *re* "Kilmainham Treaty."

† The day of our little daughter's funeral.

I reached London from Eltham, as I had wished to tell you that after our conversation I had made up my mind that it would be proper for me to put Mr. McCarthy in possession of the views which I had previously communicated to you. I desire to impress upon you the absolute necessity of a settlement of the arrears question which will leave no recurring sore connected with it behind, and which will enable us to show the smaller tenantry that they have been treated with justice and some generosity.

The proposal you have described to me as suggested in some quarters, of making a loan, over however many years the payment might be spread, should be absolutely rejected, for reasons which I have already fully explained to you. If the arrears question be settled upon the lines indicated by us, I have every confidence—a confidence shared by my colleagues—that the exertions which we should be able to make strenuously and unremittingly would be effective in stopping outrages and intimidation of all kinds.

As regards permanent legislation of an ameliorative character, I may say that the views which you always shared with me as to the admission of leaseholders to the fair rent clauses of the Act are more confirmed than ever. So long as the flower of the Irish peasantry are kept outside the Act there cannot be any permanent settlement of the land question, which we all so much desire.

I should also strongly hope that some compromise might be arrived at this season with regard to the amendment of the tenure clauses. It is unnecessary for me to dwell upon the enormous advantages to be derived from the full extension of the purchase clauses, which now seem practically to have been adopted by all parties.

The accomplishment of the programme I have sketched would, in my judgment, be regarded by the country as a practical settlement of the land question, and would, I feel sure, enable us to co-operate cordially for the future with the Liberal Party in forwarding Liberal principles; so that the Government, at the end of the session, would, from the

state of the country, feel themselves thoroughly justified in dispensing with further coercive measures.—Yours very truly,

C. S. PARNELL.

Saturday, April 30, 1882.

MY OWN QUEENIE,—He * came over to see me, so I thought it best to give him a letter, as he would have been dreadfully mortified if he had had nothing to show.

Everything is going very well, and I hope will continue straight.

Received two letters from my own lovie yesterday.

Do, my own, keep up as much as you can.

YOUR OWN KING.

I had reason to know, from various sources of information kept open by me on Parnell's behalf during his imprisonment, that the Government would liberate him with considerable relief if given any surety of conciliatory policy on his part. Parnell at liberty was a disturbing force, and the culminating embarrassment of English government in Ireland, but Parnell in prison had become merely a concentrated embarrassment in that there was now no governmental possibility of dealing with the reactionary spirit he had let loose in Ireland—a spirit that was at least better controllable as a weapon in Parnell's hand than as the scattered and absolutely irresponsible fulminations, unreasoning and motiveless, of lawless desperadoes.

With Parnell as her chief the Ireland he had roused might indeed be a scourge of whips to the British Government, but without him this Ireland was undoubtedly a scourge of scorpions.

So Parnell came out of Kilmainham on the treaty arranged at Eltham, and as Willie was to be the official

* Captain O'Shea.

bearer of the olive branch to the Government, he went over to see Parnell on his return to Kilmainham and to get from him a letter for his own satisfaction, as he said Parnell was " so shifty " he could not be trusted to carry out any agreement that was not in writing, and the letter was to set forth the various modifications of his policy of obstruction that he would undertake to observe on his (immediate) liberation and assurance of future concessions to Ireland. This letter had in substance been written at Eltham, but Parnell had stipulated for a few days to consider the matter further and would not give Willie his final decision then. On the other side he had to consider that any treaty with the Government would place him in a very awkward position with the Land League and would certainly affect the financial aid to the Irish cause so generously contributed by America. It was also certain, he knew, that the Government would be obliged, in either case, to liberate him with the other Irish political prisoners at no distant period, and this without his placing himself under any obligation at all to the Government. This would please the extreme party of his followers far better, even though it would keep open the way to further outrage and crime in Ireland.

I had never before ventured to influence Parnell in any way politically; but now I greatly dreaded for him this latter policy of the extremists and the perpetual strain of watchfulness and control it engendered—with the Coercion Laws such a policy must, in the long run, inevitably produce, unless, indeed, England was prepared to yield to force; an unthinkable proposition.

So now I threw the whole strength of my influence on the side of the treaty of conciliation and urged upon him the greater good for Ireland likely to accrue in the making by him of immediate peace. I was very anxious that he should "reign" by constitutional means, and had every hope of establishing such amicable communications between him and the Government as would lead to that end. But he had this great force now to reckon with—the force of centuries of cruelty, wrong, and oppression that had bred an irresponsibility and callous disregard of suffering, nay, rather a vindictive madness and lust of destruction in Ireland. In his seeking for a weapon to use for the betterment of England's government of Ireland Parnell had discovered this underlying force of hate, and, using the influence of his personality, he strove to direct it into the service of the Ireland that he loved. But he afterwards stood appalled at the intensity of the passion of hate that he had loosed, and no one but he—and I with him—knew the awful strength of that force of destruction that was only held in subservience by the sheer dominance of his will. He replied to my pleadings: "Yes, I hold them now with my back to the wall, but if I turn to the Government I turn my back to them—and then——?"

But my great fear for him won his decision for peace, and he wrote and signed the "letter" that Willie wanted to take to the Government.

The Prime Minister had been prepared for its coming, and made known that such a treaty of peace would be acceptable. Willie took this letter to Forster, who knew of no understanding with the Prime Minister

and was absolutely against any such negotiations. He scoffed at the letter, at its terms, and at Willie for bringing it, but the latter pointed out that the matter was one for the Prime Minister's consideration alone, and Mr. Forster was bound to submit it to him without delay. He of course did so, but with confidence as to its rejection and, on its immediate acceptance and the liberation of Parnell, resigned his office as Chief Secretary for Ireland.

Lord Cowper resigned with him. This was on the 2nd of May. On the 26th of April discussion on Mr. Redmond's Land Bill was started in the House of Commons. This Bill, which had been drafted by Parnell in Kilmainham, proposed to amend the Land Act of 1881 in four main particulars: (1) Arrears of excessive rent; (2) admission of leaseholders to the benefit of the Land Court; (3) amendment of tenure clauses; (4) extension of purchase clauses by the advance from the State of the whole of the purchase money. Mr. Gladstone applauded the Irish Party and opposed the Bill. He practically admitted that recent decisions of the Irish judges were nullifying the effect of the tenure clauses, but he did not want yet to reopen the question. He recognised, however, the necessity of dealing with "Arrears."

When, on May 2nd, he announced to the House the resignation of Lord Cowper and Mr. Forster and the decision of the Cabinet to release the three Irish M.P.'s who had been in Kilmainham since October, he definitely promised an Arrears Bill, and stated that there was no present intention to renew the Coercion Act. So, with this public promise of

Mr. Gladstone, and with the tacit understanding that Parnell would "slow down the agitation" Parnell came out of gaol. "It is an act," averred Mr. Gladstone, "done without any negotiation, promise, or engagement whatever."

Two days later Forster denounced the action of the Cabinet. He believed that the unconditioned release of the Irish leaders would tend to the encouragement of crime. As he went on to justify the arrests Parnell entered the House and took his seat. The Irish cheered wildly. Then Forster continued: "The real reason why these gentlemen were arrested . . . was because they were trying to carry out their will—'their unwritten law' . . . . by working the ruin and the injury of the Queen's subjects by intimidation of one kind or another. If Mr. Parnell had not been placed in Kilmainham he would very quickly have become in reality what he was called by many of his friends—the King of Ireland." He did not say Parnell and his friends had directly incited, what they had done was far more dangerous. They had established a system of intimidation. . . They should have been released after a public promise had been given, or when Ireland was quiet, or fresh powers had been granted to the Government. "A surrender is bad, a compromise or arrangement is worse. . . . If all England cannot govern the Member for Cork then let us acknowledge he is the greatest power in Ireland to-day."

Mr. Gladstone, in reply, said he had no right to humiliate Parnell by demanding a penitential confession of guilt, and once more he disclaimed that the release was the result of a bargain. Parnell

following him, asserted—what was the truth—that no mention of his release was made by him in any written or oral communication with his friends.

The same night, May 4th, was announced the appointment of Lord Spencer as Lord-Lieutenant and Lord Frederick Cavendish as Chief Secretary. The post had first been offered to Sir Charles Dilke, but he had refused the offer. It is stated that in certain quarters the name of Mr. Chamberlain had been mentioned, and that he had signified his willingness to accept the offer if it were made. Apparently it was not made. We cannot avoid speculating what would have happened had he gone to Ireland. He had taken a leading part in the release of Parnell; would that have saved him—since the Phœnix Park murderers did not intend to kill Lord Frederick? And if Mr. Chamberlain had been killed in May, 1882, what other course might British politics have taken? Would Tariff Reform ever have been a Tory election cry? Would there have been no Boer War? Would the Tories not have enjoyed that long term of office which for years kept the question of Home Rule in abeyance? It were foolish to say yes or no to any of these questions, but at least we may say that the fact Mr. Chamberlain was not asked to become Irish Secretary in 1882 is one of the most momentous in British politics.

While in Kilmainham Parnell had found it absolutely impossible to control in any way the incitements to crime and the wild expenditure of the Ladies' Land League. His sister, Anna Parnell, was at the head of this marvellous organisation which she spread

in well-ordered ramifications throughout the country. Her generalship was magnificent and complete, and there appeared to be no detail of this revolutionary army with which she was not completely familiar and completely determined to control. Parnell wrote to her again and again from prison, pointing out the crass folly of the criminality for which the Ladies' League, now, solely existed. He even urged the Governmental representations made to him for the suppression of this league of anarchy, and the hopeless financial position it was creating—the estimated weekly expenditure of these ladies running into thousands of pounds; money contributed chiefly by America for the fighting policy of the Irish Party—but to no purpose.

The fanatic spirit in these ladies was extreme; in Anna Parnell it was abnormal, and Parnell saw no way of saving her, or the country, from her folly but by fulfilling his threat of vetoing the payment of another penny to the Ladies' Land League. This he then did, and thus automatically broke up this wild army of mercenaries. Anna Parnell never forgave her brother for this act, and to the last day of his life refused to hold any communication with him again. Parnell had much family affection, and many times made overtures of peace to his sister, of whom he was really fond, and for whose strength of mind and will he had much respect. On two occasions he met her accidentally and tried to speak to her, but she resolutely turned from him and refused any reply to the letters he wrote her.

It may interest my readers to know that the keys of Kilmainham Gaol are still in my possession.

CHAPTER XXVI

THE PHŒNIX PARK MURDERS AND AFTER

"*The blood more stirs*
To rouse a lion than to start a hare."

SHAKESPEARE.

ON Parnell's release from Kilmainham he returned to me at Eltham, and on May 6, 1882, went to Weymouth to welcome Michael Davitt, who came out of Portland prison on that day. He returned to Eltham that Saturday evening, and the next morning, Sunday, I drove with him to Blackheath Station, as he had to go to London to see Davitt and others. At the station I asked him to get me a newspaper before he left, and waited for it in the carriage.

From where I sat in the carriage I could see Parnell's back as he stood just inside the station door. I was watching him, and he half turned and smiled at me as he opened the paper—the *Sunday Observer* —to glance at the news before he brought it to me. He told me afterwards that he wanted to see what was said about Michael Davitt. He had now come to the top of the steps and, as he suddenly stopped, I noticed a curious rigidity about his arms—raised in holding the newspaper open. He stood so absolutely still that I was suddenly frightened, horribly, sickeningly afraid

—of I knew not what, and, leaning forward, called out, "King, what is it?" Then he came down the steps to me and, pointing to the headline, said, "Look!" And I read, "Murder of Lord Frederick Cavendish and Mr. Burke!"

I heard the train coming in, and tried to pull myself together, for the awful significance of the horrible thing to my lover, just released from Kilmainham on the Treaty, came home to me with a rush of pain. His face was ashen, and he stared, frowning heavily, before him, unconsciously crushing the hand I had slipped into his until the rings I wore cut and bruised my fingers.

I said to him, "Quick, you must catch this train. See Davitt and the others as arranged and as many more as you can find. Go, you will know what to do, but you *must* meet them all at once." He turned heavily away, saying, "I shall resign," and I answered as I ran beside him to the platform, "No, you are not a coward."

Before I left Blackheath I wired to Willie to bring Parnell to dinner at Eltham if he could possibly manage it, and spent one of the most terrible days of my life considering the effect this awful crime would probably have upon my lover's career.

Willie came down that evening, Parnell with him. They were both very gloomy and depressed, and Parnell, after his greeting of me—as though this were our first meeting since he came out of prison—sat gazing stonily before him, only glancing across at Willie with the stormy flare in his eyes when the latter —who was really sorry for Parnell, as well as shocked at

the murders—said something that jarred upon him. During dinner Willie told me of what had been done during the day, of the absolute horror and consternation of the Irish Party, of what Mr. Chamberlain had said on hearing of the murders, and of Parnell's continuous threat, throughout that awful day, of retiring from public life altogether.

Willie said to me: "I wish you would urge Parnell not to talk so, Dick; he can't resign his seat now, the thing's impossible; he must show that it simply does not touch him politically in any way."

I turned to Parnell and said: "I do absolutely agree with Willie about it, Mr. Parnell. It would be throwing the whole country over and a reflection upon all who joined in that Treaty."

Parnell at last roused himself and said: "Well, I will write to the G.O.M.* and offer to resign, and abide by his decision; the thing makes me feel hopeless of doing any good."

On the wall of the dining-room where we sat hung a large engraving of the "House" of 1880. All the members of that Parliament were in the picture, and among them, of course, Mr. Parnell and Captain O'Shea. As the maid turned to leave the room, after placing the coffee tray on a little side table, this picture, which hung immediately behind Parnell, fell to the floor with a crash that, in the state of nervous tension we were all in, brought us to our feet in alarm. Willie's chair overturned as he jumped up; but Parnell's was steady, held in a grip that showed his knuckles white as he held it slightly raised off the

* Gladstone.

floor, while he stood, half turned, staring at the picture as it lay among the splintered glass.

Willie laughed, and, coming to help the parlourmaid to pick up the picture, exclaimed: "There goes Home Rule, Parnell!" But he also had in him a slight dash of the superstition that was so highly developed in Parnell's fatalistic nature, and his smile turned to gravity as he glanced at Parnell's tense expression and listened to my hasty explanation of the fall: "Perhaps the wire was rotten, or the maid had shaken the picture as she passed!" Parnell took the loose end of the wire in both hands and tried to break it. He could not. Willie said: "Mary (the parlourmaid) was the other side of the room, so she could not have shaken it." Parnell said nothing, and we began to speak of other things.

Afterwards I said to him: "You did not really mind about that picture, did you? It was only a rotten wire!" and he answered: "It was an omen, I think, darling, but for whom? Willie or me?" and when I told him I wished he would not talk such nonsense, and that I did not believe in omens or want any falling pictures to be "omens" for either of them, he smiled and said no more.

The immediate consequence of the Phœnix Park murders was the introduction of a Crimes Bill by Sir William Harcourt on May 11th. Parnell was not approached on the subject. He was given no opportunity of criticising the proposals and of suggesting any more moderate measure which might have appealed to that great body of Irish Nationalists who viewed the murders with horror. The new Bill went

roughshod over Irish opinion, and the conciliatory effect of the Arrears Bill, introduced a few days later, was altogether marred.

On May 15th, 1882, there was a scene in the House about the Kilmainham Treaty. Mr. Charles Lewis asked Mr. Gladstone to produce the letters which were the evidence of the intentions of the recently released members. Mr. Gladstone did not wish to produce these letters, but saw no reason why, if the writers and those to whom the letters were addressed did not object, the letters should not be produced. Parnell then rose and read the letter he had given to Captain O'Shea.

Then Lord John Manners "must ask" if this was the *only* letter received by the Government; to which the Premier returned that he had some information in addition to the letter (he did not say considerable information). Then Mr. Forster had his little revenge in blandly asking if Mr. Parnell had read the *whole* of the letter. Parnell replied that he had read the whole of the copy given him by Captain O'Shea, but the original had another paragraph which he had no objection to reading.

Then Captain O'Shea wanted to explain the whole circumstances. Mr. Forster, still smarting under the snub to him of Parnell's release, would not play up to Mr. Gladstone, but handed Willie the letter as it had been given to him to take to Mr. Gladstone. Captain O'Shea ran his eye over it, and handed it back to Mr. Forster amid laughter from the Conservatives. Mr. Forster declined to take back the letter, and, after a moment's hesitation, Captain O'Shea read it through, including the paragraph in which Mr. Parnell undertook

that in the circumstances stated, he would with his party co-operate with the Liberals in forwarding their principles as far as he could.

Then a member wished to know if Mr. Gladstone had had the letter in his possession at the time he stated that there was no compact between the Land Leaguers and the Liberal Party; to which the Premier replied that he certainly had, and that he again and emphatically repeated the statement.

On May 16th Sir Stafford Northcote began to heckle the Government again upon the subject of the Kilmainham Treaty. He wanted to know many things, and among others was anxious to hear if Michael Davitt was released as a condition of Mr. Parnell's support of Liberal principles. Mr. Gladstone was prepared to answer questions, but not to volunteer statements. No member of the Government had had interviews with Mr. Parnell—to his knowledge—and there was no stipulation as to the release of Michael Davitt or on any other subject. Several other members then joined in the baiting of the Premier, but without other result than the ruffling of that old eagle's feathers.

Mr. Gibson made a speech, during which there was the unusual scene of the Premier's rising to make a personal statement and Mr. Gibson's refusing to give way.

The Premier sat down. The Speaker called Mr. Gibson to order amid uproar, and Mr. Gibson at last gave way to let Mr. Gladstone get his protest home.

Mr. Gladstone declined to express any opinion on Mr. Forster's conduct in bringing before the House

a private communication received by him as a Cabinet Minister after he had left the Cabinet. Mr. Gladstone was, he said, in no better position to pass judgment upon such conduct than was any other member of the House—a comment that was received with loud cheers. Mr. Forster hastily explained that he would not have done so had it not been for the statement of Captain O'Shea. Captain O'Shea promptly rose to give battle, but was suppressed by the Speaker. Mr. Gladstone wanted to know if a fair statement of the charge against the Government was, as Mr. Balfour had set forth, that Mr. Parnell was to obtain his release, and to obtain legislation as to arrears, on condition that he would obtain peace for the Government in Ireland and give the Liberals support in the House with his party? He was answered by cheers from the Opposition, and Mr. Gladstone turned to the Speaker: "May I say, sir, that there is not one word of truth in it from beginning to end?"

Sir William Harcourt made a speech pointing out the inability of Mr. Balfour to make fair comment on the matter in hand. Branching off, he then answered Mr. Gibson's questions to his own satisfaction, and was followed by Lord John Manners, who was loath to let the matter drop. Mr. Forster again complained that it wasn't fair, and that the other boy began it!

After other intervention Mr. Chamberlain tried to soothe all sides by explaining that the sentence that was not in the copy letter read by Mr. Parnell was not noticed by him when he first was shown the original by Captain O'Shea, and, though the latter gentleman had asked to withdraw that sentence, it

had seemed of so little importance that he (Mr. Chamberlain) had really not noticed it was omitted when Mr. Parnell read the letter.

Captain O'Shea here intervened with a very telling little speech, in which he made it quite clear that, although he was not well up in the etiquette of Cabinet Ministers, he had had a fairly long acquaintance with the usages of gentlemen, and from the latter point of view the conduct of Mr. Forster on the previous night was most extraordinary. He must characterise Mr. Forster's conduct as "disloyal to his old friends and malignant to his old enemies." . . .

The second reading of the Arrears Bill was moved by Mr. Gladstone on May 22nd. In the course of his speech he said: "Eviction in the exercise of a legal right may be to the prejudice of your neighbours, may involve the highest reprehension, may even imply deep moral guilt. There may be outrages which—all things considered, the persons and the facts—may be less guilty in the sight of God than evictions."

The Bill was bitterly opposed by the Tory Party.

I had written to Mr. Gladstone expressing a wish that he should see Mr. Parnell. He wrote in answer from Downing Street on May 25th, 1882, declining to do so *in private*, though in public he was more than ready to co-operate with Parnell.

I suggested in reply that we should meet and talk the matter over, and it was arranged that he should come to see me at Thomas's Hotel on June 2nd. He arrived punctually at three o'clock. We had a long talk about Parnell and about politics—chiefly, of course, as referring to Ireland. He was extremely

agreeable and courteous, and I remember very well the great charm of manner he possessed, a charm that struck me afresh at each subsequent meeting. A natural charm and, no doubt, a natural insincerity, but one which is such an immense asset in the career of a great man: that of making others believe—or wish to believe—that they are on the same plane of intellect and diplomacy as himself! He was a very great old man, I thought, as his wonderful eagle's eyes showed just sufficient admiration in them to savour of homage without offence. And I may say here that, with all the perfect courtesy of which, when he chose, he was past master, he knew before the conclusion of our interview, and allowed me to know that he knew, what I desired that he should know—that my personal interest in Parnell was my only interest in Irish politics.

Mr. Gladstone having agreed that it would be of considerable convenience to the Government to be in private and amicable communication with Mr. Parnell, and that I, whose interests were inseparable from those of the Irish leader, would be confidently accepted as such intermediary by him, we parted satisfied, I think, on both sides with the afternoon's compact.

After this first interview with Mr. Gladstone I had frequently to see him at Downing Street—taking him drafts, clauses, and various proposed amendments (of Bills affecting Ireland) that Parnell proposed, altered, and suggested privately to Gladstone before putting them before the House. Parnell, of course, always intent on the betterment of the law as affect-

ing Ireland; Gladstone bargaining for the Irish vote when without it he would have lost his majority.

Parnell would sometimes write the rough draft of what he wished Gladstone to know, or sometimes write what he had to say in the form of a letter (often dating it from my house!), but occasionally he would do neither, as, on more than one important occasion, he said: "I don't trust that Grand Old Spider farther than I can see him. Sweetheart, learn this by heart, and let it off at him yourself." Then I had to take down in my own handwriting what he wished proposed to Gladstone, and at the subsequent interview "let it off" at him. Very often letters were sufficient, and in this case I almost invariably wrote them, or, if the letter was in Parnell's handwriting addressed to me, under cover of my envelope, I would request its return, and this was done; letters intended for Parnell by Gladstone being invariably addressed to me.

It was by my suggestion Mr. Gladstone opened these private negotiations with Mr. Parnell, and I was myself much amused to find that both these great statesmen were of one mind as to the danger of such a trusting of one another as such negotiations necessitated. When I said to Parnell, "Why not see Gladstone yourself privately, and get what you can from him, in return for the Irish vote?" he at once replied that such a proceeding would be fatal to the "cause," and when I said much the same thing to Gladstone at our first interview—which latter was a brilliant inspiration of Parnell's own—he replied that "such a proceeding" would be fatal to his position, but, he added, "it might be advantageous to the Irish leader and myself

if you, Mrs. O'Shea, would accept the thankless office of go-between, as you suggest. A safe and secret intermediary might well prove to be of the greatest assistance to us both in our efforts for the welfare of the country." I have wondered since which country the G.O.M. had in his mind as he spoke.

On June 17th and 18th, 1882, Gladstone wrote to me. The letter of the 17th was little more than a formal acknowledgment, but in his note of the following day he referred me to something which had passed at our last interview. He had on that occasion directed my attention to the proposal to amend certain severe clauses of the Crimes Act.

Meanwhile the Irish were fighting the Crimes Bill inch by inch. It had been read a second time on May 25th after three nights' debate. The most drastic clause, from the legal point of view, was the suspension of the right of trial by jury in all grave cases of agrarian crime, which (and the Government would decide when) would be tried by a Court of three judges, in such district as the Attorney-General might decide. Public meetings could be proclaimed and newspapers suppressed. The police were vested with power to search private houses and arrest night wanderers. Finally, and against this the Irish Party especially protested—magistrates were empowered to convict summarily on charges of incitement, boycotting, and membership of a secret society.

This was the iron heel with a vengeance; it took from the Irish the last vestige of citizen right. Parnell opposed, yet not violently; the remembrance of the Phœnix Park murders held him back. But the

speeches of his followers were bitter in the extreme. "What profit," cried Dillon, "can you ever expect from governing a nation which nothing conciliates, and nothing can subdue?" Of all the fifty Coercion Acts passed in the eighty-eight years since the Union this was the worst.

The second reading was carried by 383 votes against 45.

Parnell expressed a desire that Gladstone should have his (Parnell's) views distinctly put before him by me—not in writing. This did not suit Gladstone. He had no intention of giving away his hand in regard to the Crimes Bill, and, in the then temper of his own Party and of the Conservatives, was not at all desirous of making any further *private* concession that would certainly place him in a too favourable light (as regards this Bill) in the eyes of the Irishmen.

He was determined not to see me again with reference to the Crimes Bill, and on June 23rd he wrote me to that effect. It was obvious from the tone of his letter that he was annoyed by the continued opposition of the Irish Party, which, from his point of view, only served to impede the progress of the Arrears Bill.

On one of my visits to Downing Street I told Gladstone of the inner working of the Ladies' Land League, about which he was curious. I mentioned to him the enormous sum these Lady Leaguers had expended and the great difficulty Parnell had had in suppressing them. On hearing the sum of their estimated weekly expenditure a grim smile flitted over his face. "*Very* satisfactory," he remarked, "as the ladies have

evidently put these large sums beyond the power of—of the Land League's expenditure!"

Gladstone would not sit still when he talked to me, but liked to pace up and down the long room with me. On my entry he would rise from his desk to greet me and, solemnly handing me a chair, would walk down the room to the door at the end, which was always open when I entered, close it firmly and, pacing back to the door of my entry, push it. These preparations always made me smile—a smile in which he joined as, coming up to me and offering me his arm, he said: "Do you mind walking up and down the room, I talk better so." So we paced up and down while I voiced Parnell's instructions and listened to the G.O.M.'s views, intentions, and tentative suggestions, always on my part keeping to "It is considered that, etc.," in giving Parnell's point, and always receiving "Your friend should, etc," or "I am prepared to concede to your friend, etc., in return."

He was so careful in this regard that one day I said: "What is it you shut up in that room, Mr. Gladstone, when I come to see you?"

"Persons, or a person, you do not come to see, Mrs. O'Shea. Only a secretary or so, and occasionally, in these times of foolish panic, detectives. No," in answer to my look of inquiry, "no one can overhear a word we say when we pace up and down like this, and, as you do not mind it, it refreshes me."

Always as I stood face to face with this Grand Old Man on leaving, and looked into his slate-coloured eyes, so like those of an eagle, I experienced a sudden

uneasy feeling, in spite of his gracious courtesy, of how like to a beautiful bird of prey this old man was: with the piercing, cruel eyes belying the tender, courteous smile, and how, relentless as an eagle, men like this had struck and torn their victims. But to me, personally, he always showed the marvellous charm of manner which sent me away feeling that I was at least a compelling force in the great game of politics and worthy of the place I held.

The political history of this time has been written many times, and from various points of view, and in this book I do not propose to repeat it, but only to record such point or detail as at the time affected my King in his home life.

END OF VOL. I.

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